

**Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha**  
(Regd.)

292, Jayshankar Yagnik Marg, Bombay-400 022.  
Telephone Nos. : 48 39 78, 48 30 63, 48 51 64

**MAGAZINE SUB-COMMITTEE**

Shri Jayaram Mani  
Shri S. Jayaram  
Shri A. Kandaswamy  
Shri K. Kannan

Shri T. V. K. Murthy  
Shri R. Srinivasan  
Dr. (Smt.) Sulochana Rajendran

**CONVENOR**

Shri B. Ramanathan

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS**

**President**

Dr. V. Subramanian

**Vice-Presidents**

Shri S. R. Kasturi  
Dr. K. S. Varadhachary

**Hon. Secretaries**

Shri S. Seshadri  
Shri R. R. Rao

**Hon. Treasurer**

Shri E. R. R. Chari

**EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD**

Dr. Semmangudi R. Srinivasier  
Shri T. S. Parthasarathy  
Shri N. R. Bhuvanarahan  
Shri Lalgudi Jayaraman  
Dr. H. K. Ranganath

Shri T. N. Krishnan  
Shri K. S. Mahadevan  
Shri T. K. Mahalingam Pillai  
Shri Umayalpuram Sivaraman

Shri B. Ramanathan (Convenor)

**Hon. Editor**

Dr. (Smt.) Sulochana Rajendran

**CONTENTS**

Vol. XVII

JULY 1991

Number 3

A Tribute to Rajiv — The Patron of Arts	... By Dr. V. Subramanian	... 5
Contribution of Oothukkadu Kavi Venkatasubbier	... By Prof. K. R. Rajagopalan	... 9
An Ocean Unexplored	... By Ravi Kiran	... 15
Needamangalam Krishnamoorthy Bhagavathar	... By N. Rajagopalan	... 19
Laya in Raga	... By Prof. R. Visweswaran	... 22
Some Less-Known Aspects of the Compositions of Tyagaraja	... By Prof. K. R. Rajagopalan	... 25
Evolution of Mrudangam	... By B. M. Sundaram	... 27
Sahitya in Thumri — II	... By Chander Shekar Pant	... 33
Cultural Scene in Bombay	... By KINNARI	... 38
The Towering Embar — A Tribute	... By Sulochana Rajendran	... 41
ஹரிகதை ... By ஸங்கீத கலாநிதி எம்பார் விஜய ராகவாச்சாரியார்		... 44

Price per Copy Rs. 8/-

Editor : Dr. (Smt.) Sulochana Rajendran

The views expressed in SHANMUKHA are writers' own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the publishers.



WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS FROM

## PANKAJ MERCANTILE COMPANY

(EXPORT HOUSE RECOGNISED BY THE GOVT. OF INDIA)

MANUFACTURERS, EXPORTERS REPRESENTATIVES.

SCARFS, STOLES, SHAWLS PAREOS, TIES MADE OF  
VISCOSE, RAYON, COTTON, WOOL, SILK, JAQUARDS, HANDBAGS,  
BELTS AND FASHION JEWELLERY

42, G. D. AMBEKAR ROAD,  
202, INDIA PRINTING HOUSE,  
OFF. WADALA POST OFFICE,  
WADALA, BOMBAY-400 031.

Phones : 412 74 74/412 74 37/412 70 86

Cable : PANKAJRISE

Telex : 11-73847 MANU IN

Fax : 413 71 54

*Shanmukha*

## IN FOCUS

*In the gory death of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, India has lost one of its dynamic cultural patrons. The fillip that the performing arts and crafts received at the hands of this Patron of Arts during his tenure as the Prime Minister of India, in Festivals of India abroad and Apna Utsavs at home, needs no reiteration. SHANMUKHA carries a touching Tribute by Dr. V. Subramanian, the President of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, to this departed leader.*

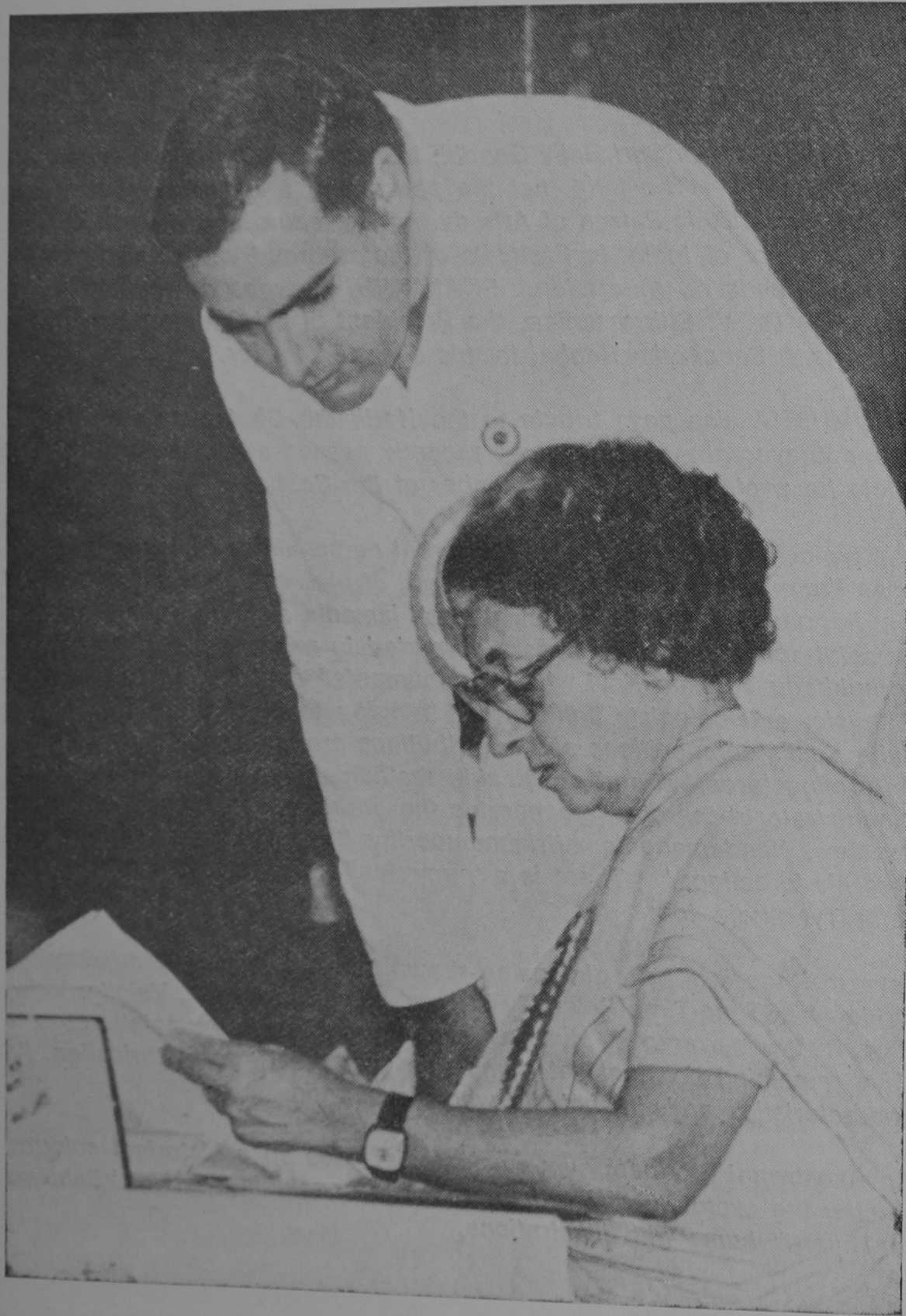
*SHANMUKHA also pays tribute to the Harikatha Chakravarthi, Embar Vijayaraghavachariar, who recently passed away, by publishing an article he wrote for a special number of the Sabha.*

*'It is typically Indian-style to shroud great personalities by legends and leave them immersed in mystery instead of preserving facts and events that happened in their lives and times', laments a young maestro. No saint-composer's life is more shrouded in mystery than that of Oothukkadu Venkata Kavi whose 'monumental' contribution to the world of music, musicologists fight shy of bringing to limelight! The Maha Kavi's compositions and contributions are analysed by a performing 'prodigy' and a versatile mathematician while an administrator-researcher enumerates the efforts a descendant of the Kavi, Needamangalam Krishnamoorthy Bhagavathar, took in keeping alive his 'creations.' There is a 'numerical' homage to the memory of Saint Tyagaraja too.*

*Laya in Raga is a new dimension drawn into the musical landscape. Calling his 'Tone-Time Relativity Theory', "Laya in Raga", Vainika Vidwan Prof. R. Visweswaran of Mysore University copiously enunciates how Laya remaining dormant yet dominates over the Raga picturisation, its characteristics and, in fact, its whole swaroopa.*

*An Akashwani producer-cum-musicologist goes on a historical sojourn, tracing the evolution of Mrudangam. The concluding part of "Sahitya in Thumri" hums with illustrations.*





INDIRAJI & RAJIVJI AT SHANMUKHANANDA HALL

## A TRIBUTE TO RAJIV—THE PATRON OF ARTS

["Fine Arts is in our tradition, in our culture, in our home and in our work-a-day life. Music helps the mind concentrate, lightens the load and tension and inspires aesthetic creativity," observed Dr. V. Subramanian, President of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Bombay, at a Symposium organised by the Sabha.

"Just as democracy is the expression of popular will, there must be, some say," he continued, "expression of popular will in music and dance too. Popular will is not pollution of the classical varieties we have inherited. May be efforts could be made in elevating the popular form and also harmonising it with the cultural forms of our country. Not so easy, though, there is ample scope."

An awareness of our rich cultural heritage is an essential step towards this and the fillip came when the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi took us ahead on a great cultural leap forward, with Festivals of India abroad and Apna Utsavs at home, that gave exposure to a variety of our performing arts and crafts. If Festivals of India in Great Britain, the USA, USSR and France boosted the cultural image of India the world over, the Apna Utsavs were meant to "take culture to the very doorstep of the people" and to help them "discover what binds us together."

In the gory death of Rajiv Gandhi, the country has lost one of its dynamic cultural patrons. Following is a touching Tribute Dr. V. SUBRAMANIAN paid to the departed leader at the Sabha premises on May 26, 1991.

This was preceded by a Prayer Session of chanting ten times Shri Vishnu Sahasranamam by Sri Vijaya Ganapathy Vishnusahasranama Japa Yagna Mandali, Madras.]

When on the 21st May Night, at about 11 O' Clock, I received the news of the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, I was stunned. I was shocked, I was smothered, I remembered the English Poet John Keats when he said,

*"My heart aches and a drowzy numbness pains my senses,  
As though of hemlock I had drunk."*

I was reminded of Arjuna who saw his kin arrayed in the battlefield of Kurukshetra when he said,

*Seedanti Mama Gatrani Mukhascha Parisushyati,  
Vepathuscha Shareere Roma Harshascha Jaayate  
Na Cha Shaknomi Avasthaatum Bramati Cha Me Manah  
Nimithhaanicha Pasyaami Vipareetaani Keshava  
Na Cha Sreyo Anupasyami Hatwaa Swajanam Aahave*

(My limbs quail and my mouth gets parched. My body quivers and my hairs stand on end, I am not able to stand still; my mind whirls as it were; Oh Krishna I see bad omens and I do not see any good in killing our own kith and kin in battle).



This was Arjuna lamenting about the consequences if people died in battle, but here was a person who had not gone to battle, who had appealed to people not to go to battle, but to settle their disputes peacefully. And yet this has happened to him.

During the course of the last few years three of the greatest leaders of this century in India have fallen to the Assassin's bullets. The Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, was cruelly assassinated on 30th January, 1948. The Mother of the Nation, Rashtramata Indira Gandhi, was felled most foully by her own Security Guards on 31st October, 1984 and here was Rajiv Gandhi, the Father — if I might say so — of Twentyfirst Century India blasted by a bomb of a barbaric animal in human form on the 21st May, 1991.

What was common in these three greatest individuals of this Century? It was their desire to eschew violence, their desire to induce peace in the entire sub-continent, their desire to spread the gospel of the universality of non-violence and to inscribe the philosophy of *VASUDAIVA KUTUMBAKAM*. Three of the greatest men of this century fell as victims to the cruelty of persons who did not understand this great philosophy.

There is also something in common between these three incidents. Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, wanted this Nation to eschew the path of strife and violence, to embrace Ahimsa, to see that good is done to all human beings and particularly the lowest members of Society. He wanted to eliminate the difference between caste and caste, class and class, religion and religion, community and community. But perhaps we were not ripe enough for imbibing this great doctrine and therefore on the 30th of January, 1948, he fell to an Assassin's bullet who thought that the extermination of Gandhi would save the country.

Then came Indiraji. Indiraji again strove for the unity of the country, the progressive eradication of violence and the introduction of peaceful methods of solving disputes. At the height of the difficulties in this country, Indiraji fell as a victim to the assassins who were her own protectors. Those who were expected to guard and protect her had actually done this foul deed. And one always remembers, the words she spoke in Bhubaneshwar, a day before she died :

"If I die, it would not matter; but every drop of my blood will be shed for the unity and the integrity of the Nation".

We thought the chapter of violence had ended. But it was not to be.

During the five years when Rajiv Gandhi was Prime Minister of this country, the young man with great foresight, discrimination and determi-

nation did several acts in order to bring about Unity in this country and to save it from senseless violence and strife. He had the Punjab accord approved. He tried to bring about peace in Kashmir. He went to Assam and signed an accord of understanding with the militants. He went across to Sri Lanka and had an accord with them. He did everything possible in order to enable Indians to live as Brothers with themselves and Indians to live as Brothers with people all over the world. And yet this great young man was not able to get for the Party of which he was the leader, a majority in Parliament in 1989 which would have enabled him to carry the country to even greater heights. But that did not disturb him and he continued his efforts for peace. All the World today grieves for the loss of this great man.

Here again this is an instance of a person who wanted to bring about *Ahimsa*, understanding. A real incarnation of the philosophy *SARVADHARMA SAMBHAVA*. Yet he was extirpated by an assassin. 800 million Indians should hang their heads in shame. This is the land of *Ahimsa*. This is the land purified by the souls of saints and sanctified by the sacrifices of patriots. In the land of the Buddha and Krishna, in the land of Adi Sankara, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, this is what is happening. No wonder the other day somebody said that we call ourselves a Nation, pledged to non-violence; the truth however is we have still a long way to go before we can say that we are qualified to be considered a non-violent nation. That this has happened in Tamilnadu, a land of peace and piety, is something about which all of us in particular should hang our heads in shame.

Mahatma Gandhi started his career by association with the Tamil indentured Labour in South Africa. Rashtramata Indiraji was always called 'Ammamma' by the people of Tamilnadu. They would not even take her name. She had established for herself a place in their hearts deeply entrenched in their affection for her. What Rajiv Gandhi has done for Tamilian and Tamilnadu is there for anybody to see. How many times during the course of the last six or seven years Rajivji had flown out to Tamilnadu to participate in their sufferings and in their sorrows and share in their joy, in the functions and programmes. But in spite of that this thing has happened.

We always decry politicians. Here were three outstanding people of our generation who took to politics in order to introduce a period of *Ahimsa*, unity and affection and understanding between the people. It was, however, politicians who have their own self-interest to serve that have been responsible for this dastardly crime. It is the most heinous crime of this century. It is one of the most cruel acts in the history of human kind. It has snatched from us a person, young only 47 years old and likely during the course of the next ten or fifteen years to have made



this country recapture the image of height in the international arena, of economic progress, of social cohesion, political stability, and cultural glory which symbolises mutual trust, universal brotherhood, compassion to God's creation and harmony between all living brings.

We have been orphaned. The Nation stands in mourning. The likes of people like Rajiv Gandhi are not born everyday or every year, not even once in a century as a rule and if this is to happen to such a person, I do not know whether any amount of penitence will bring back the fair name of India. Here we are saddened forever and as the English Poet John Keats said :

*"Thou was not born for death immortal Bird  
No hungry generations tread thee down."*

We shall pray to Almighty that He gives courage to the family. We shall pray the Almighty to save this nation from further strife and violence and to enable us to go back to the path of *Ahimsa*, affection and tolerance. We should pray to the Almighty that India should be bestowed the wisdom to play a better role in International peace so that the philosophy of "Universal Brotherhood" is established. We are not small-minded people. Indians and Bharatiyas all over the world have been noted for their universality and liberality. A beautiful Sanskrit verse runs as follows :

*O Ayam Nijah Paro Vethi Ganana Laghu Chetasam  
Udaara Charitanam Tu Vasudaiva Kutumbakam.*

This is mine. This is somebody else".  
Such is the thinking of small minds. But to the liberal-minded the whole world is one family.

This incidentally is the motto inscribed in the arch of the Gateway to Parliament. Our Constitution is committed to this philosophy and our rulers to implement it.

We have to recapture the spirit of liberality. If we have to recapture the spirit of oneness with humankind, God Almighty's grace should be sought. We should invoke His blessings to give all of us the strength and courage to bear the distress to walk in silent, homage to the departed soul and yet with fortitude and determination that India shall not die even though a cruel Assassin has killed one of the greatest leaders of our times.

## CONTRIBUTION OF OOTHUKKADU KAVI VENKATASUBBIER

By

Prof. K. R. RAJAGOPALAN

**M**ore than a decade and a half ago, I had my first "contact" with the numerically large number of compositions of Oothukkadu Kavi Venkatasubbier. Till then, I had heard a few of them being sung rather rarely — this must have been the experience of many an other rasika also. The most important of them was of course *Taaye Yasoda* (Todi), which formed part of the repertoire of many a leading dancer of earlier years. *Alai Paayude* (Kana-da) and *Madhura Madhura* (Athana) were the other two. Hence when one of my students remarked that she knew around a hundred of Sri Kavi's songs, I was surprised and then started trying to locate them.

### BETWEEN PITAMAHA & TRINITY

The search led me to Needamangalam Krishnamoorthy Bhagavatar who was the fountainhead of them all. With his help and that of a few disciples, I was able to collect data regarding nearly three hundred of the songs. Since I was keen that Oothukkadu should be made familiar to a larger audience, my first paper was sent to the *Journal of Sangeet Natak Academi*\*. In this paper, for the first time, an alphabetical list of the songs giving the first words, Raga, Tala, language, deity sung, were all listed for future reference. (I had made similar listing of the

compositions of Tyagaraja and Dikshitar as part of my homage on the occasion of the Bicentenary of their births). I was happy to do it for Sri Kavi, who among the earlier composers stands magnificent holding his own — between the Pitamaha Purandaradasa and the Tiruvarur Trinity.

### THE SPREAD OF THE SONGS

It is not the object of this article to deal in detail with the life and doings of the Kavi. Nevertheless narration is essential regarding how the compositions have come down to the present day.

### HUMBLE OFFERINGS

The Kavi was not in the habit of composing for composing sake nor was he interested in seeing that his compositions were learnt by others and preserved for posterity. The Kavi meant them as his humble offerings to the deity, especially Lord Krishna in His dancing form of Nartana Gopala. Being a Naishtika Brahmachari (life-long celibate), and not having any direct disciples, the songs had no means of propagation. A Nagaswaram player of Tanjavur learnt a few songs on the sly and these caught the fancy of a few vidwans !

Kattukrishnier, an elder brother of the Sri Kavi was also a musician and

\*Vide References Nos. 1, 4 & 5 for information.



he wrote down many of the songs and these were passed on to the scions of the family through his daughters. One such scion was the Needamangalam Bhagavatar who made it his life's mission to "popularise" such good compositions to which, by God's grace he was the inheritor. Bhagavatar took every conceivable opportunity to render those beautiful compositions — during both his earlier musical career and Kathakalakshepams later. If at all Oothukkadu is recognised as a composer of great merit today, it is in no small measure due to the consistent and persistent efforts of the Bhagavatar.\*

Needamangalam gave a number of demonstrations of the Kavi's songs at the prestigious Music Academy of Madras as early as 1955 and followed it up in 1963. He did it three times under the Fine Arts Society also. Three more descendants of the composer — who had their initial training under Needamangalam — have also been propagating the songs through their rather limited number of concerts, and through teaching them to their 'pupils'. The author presented a paper on a short analysis of the Kavi's compositions in the Music Academy in 1978. In

the earliest of such 'talks', among the listeners were the great stalwarts such as Palladam Sanjeeva Rao and T. V. Subba Rao. They unanimously agreed (as quoted in the Academy reports) on the excellence of those compositions; they wondered how they had missed such a rare treat all those years!

Of course, disbelieving eyebrows were raised.

"Oothukkadu was not mentioned in such and such a book/books and so they should not be considered genuine!"

We have had, however, such controversies earlier, and, later too! During the bicentenary of Tyagaraja, one of the front-ranking Vidwans introduced some score and odd of "recently found Kritis of Tyagaraja — but nothing was heard of them, later! Who had heard of Tallapakkam Annamacharya's compositions, say, forty/fifty years ago? We still have a controversy regarding the compositions of Maharaja Swati Tirunal. For that matter, even some of the Kritis of Dikshitar were not known around sixty years ago — two of his descendants kept on publishing one or two 'new' Kritis in the *Journal of the*

*Music Academy* for nearly two decades!

Whatever the criticism, the musical settings of Sri Kavi's compositions, the easy facility with which the Tamil language especially blends with the music in these, their admirable Madhyamakala passages (both in Sanskrit and Tamil), the breath-taking dance jatis in a number of songs are hard to match in any other composer — past or present in that language. After listening to some of these captivating songs, one would be forced to admit that Tamil is equally if not better suited to 'Karnataka Sangeetham'!

#### NAVA — AVARANA KRITIS

Among the many modes of worship of the Divine Mother, a Tantric method is to offer worship through the nine avaranas which are in the form of geometric figures of triangles, petals and squares. Each avarana has a name, a configuration, beelaksharas, a presiding deity, its own Yoginis and Mudras. Till recently, it was thought that Muthuswamy Dikshitar was the first to compose a set of songs for these avaranas. Now it is known that Oothukkadu was the earlier composer and for him the Deity was Mother Kamakshi of Kanchi, while for Dikshitar it was Kamalamba of Tiruvarur. Following his general preference for rakti-ragas the Kavi has used mostly such ragas for those compositions — Balahamsa, Bilahari, Nandanamakriya, Madhyamavati, Arabi, Hindolam, Navarasakannada and the like. But it is to be noted that the talas used contain such a rare one as Khan-

da Matya! Matya Tala itself is rarely used and the Khanda variety would certainly be rarer. One wonders whether there would be any other example of a composition set to this time-measure!

The compositions of Sri Kavi regarding the Nava-avaranas (there are actually eleven songs, with an introductory and a Mangalam Kritis) are replete with the specific details of interest in each avarana. The name of the chakra is invariably mentioned, the details of the geometrical configuration — inner ten triangles, outer ten triangles, three lines, eight triangles etc., — are given, the names of the Yoginis (deities associated with the chakra or avarana) are also specified; so also are the Beejasharas and the Mudras in many of the songs.

A comparison regarding the texts of these songs and those of Muthuswamy Dikshitar has been made. It should be mentioned, in passing, that the name of this composer as "Venkatakavi" is available only in one Kritis of this group in Ghanta Raga, Adi Tala. No other of the nearly three hundred songs has the 'mudra' of the composer,

These kritis have been published in mimeo-form with the notation provided by Needamangalam Bhagavathar some short time before his sad demise<sup>2</sup>. The author has given free copies of this booklet to quite a few individuals and organisations which are supposed to be interested in music in the fond hope that some day he would listen to them being rendered. But sad to say, upto now dame luck has not favoured him!

\*Quite recently, the author happened to visit the village Oothukkadu (near Kumbhakonam) and was pleasantly surprised to learn that a Kumbhabhishekam had been performed there earlier in February 1988 under the presence of Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal. Though a small one, the temple is well-maintained. At the entrance, there is a new-shrine for Nartana Ganapati on whom the Kavi has composed the song — **Ananda Nartana Ganapati** (Nata-Adi).

It was also gratifying to note that a small idol of Sri Kavi has been installed in the Pradakshina Prakaram (circum-ambulatory passage). A large sized photograph of Needamangalam Bhagavatar is also displayed in the temple premises.

What is now required is, perhaps, a regular annual Aradhana — like festival in which leading musicians and others can participate by learning and singing the Kavi's compositions.

(1) Vide Reference No. 6.

(2) Vide Reference No. 3.



## SRI KAVI'S PLACE IN THE MUSICAL HERITAGE

The beginnings of Karnatak Sangeetha as is practised today in all the four States of South India can be traced mainly to the influence of the Bhakti movement started by the Alwars and nurtured by the Acharyas of Srivaishnavism. The Bhakti movement all over the country is mostly Vaishnavite in character.

- |                          |                                               |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1. Bhajanamruta          | — Nata — Adi — Ten charanas                   |
| 2. Madhavahari           | — Kalyani — Adi — Seven charanas              |
| 3. Aganita mahima        | — Gowla — Adi — Eight charanas                |
| 4. Bala Sarasa           | — Keeravani — Adi — Seven charanas            |
| 5. Mahasayahrudaya       | — Abhogi — Adi — Two charanas                 |
| 6. Visati Visati Krishna | — Gowrimanohari — Misrachapu — Three charanas |
| 7. Sundarananda          | — Madhyamavati — Adi — Five charanas.         |

Kabir, Tulsidas, Bhakta, Ramdas, Tyagaraja, Oothukkadu Kavi, Arunachala Kavirayar, Mira Bai, Purandaradasa, and Annamacharya, to mention a few, sung about the glories of Rama and Krishna, two of the avatars of Vishnu.

The kriti format may be said to be stabilised by the Pitamaha Purandaradasa and his elder contemporary Annamacharya who was "discovered" hardly fifty years ago! Our Sri Kavi belongs to the period between these two savants and that of the Tiruvarur Trinity, Tyagaraja, Dikshitar and Syama Sastri. He has followed the Kriti pattern of the earlier composers and also the Kannigal pattern (number of Stanzas sung to the same tune) of the Divya Prabandham of the earlier Alwars.

### INFLUENCE ON TYAGARAJA

Regarding the influence of Sri Kavi on those who came after him — notably

the Tiruvarur Trinity, not much work appears to have been done. Tyagaraja's "indebtedness" to Purandaradasa, Annamacharya and Bhadrachala Ramadas have been well researched. But whether he was influenced or inspired by Oothukkadu Kavi is not known. The possible comparison which could more easily be made might be between the Saptaratna Kritis of Sri Kavi and the Pancharatnas of Tyagaraja. The seven Kritis of Sri Kavi are :

Here too, we note the preference for rakti ragas and for Madhyamavati. Tyagaraja later sang his Pancharatna Kritis in the ragas-Nata, Gowla, Arabi, Varali and Sri. The kritis of Tyagaraja have been analysed, a number of times in detail — one author trying to find Ashtottarasata (108) names of the lord in the kriti *Jagadanandakaraka*! This is because the text, meaning and notation of all these songs have been available for nearly a hundred years. Sri Kavi's compositions have just started coming into limelight and only a few songs have been printed with text and notation. Naturally, it requires quite a few ardent 'Sishyas' of Oothukkadu to bring out all the brilliance of the words and the musical grandeur of these compositions.

An attempt has been made below to compare the sahityas of Nata-Saptaratna with the Sri Raga Pancharatnam.

Tyagaraja mentions the following Bhaktas of the Lord — Sanaka, Sanandana, Digeesa, Sura, Kimpurusha, Kanakakasipusuta (Prahlada), Narada, Tumburu, Pravana Soonu (Anjaneya), Suka etc. Let us look at one of the Charanas of *Bhajanamruta* (Nata) of Sri Kavi — Sarasijabhava, Sukumara, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana, Narada Suka, Kanakakasipusuta, Sanjeevagiridruta (Anjaneya) etc. Could the commonality of many of the names — especially Kanakakasipusuta — be mere coincidence? More research may be needed, perhaps.

Sri Kavi mentions in the same Kriti the following among the bhaktas of Sri Rama. Dasamukhasodara (Vibheeshana) gets the pride of place, followed by Guha, Sabari, Sugriva, Angada and the like. Some of the methods of worship he highlights are : Bhagavatkahta pataka, Sravana, Sadasmarana, Bhajana, Gunakeertana, etc.

Among the 'Sangita' Bhaktas later mentioned we find the names of both Saivaite Nayanmars and Vaishnavite Alwars along with other composers upto and including Purandaradasa! The list is quite impressive too! — Vaageesa, Sivapadahrudayasuta, Manivachaka, Sundara, Ramanuja, Kulase-

khara, Vishnuchitta, Parakala, Purandaradasa, Tulasidasa. The Lord is worshipped also through innumerable ragas, *Aganita Raga* and the *Nava-vidha* (nine-types) *Talas*.

### SALIENT FEATURES

The alliterative passages in most of his compositions are pleasantly worded. While many examples may be cited, we shall give only three :

1. Veda Durandhara-vinuta nirantara (Mahasaya-Abhogi)
2. Ganajala-Vrajalola-madhukala-Kanakadukula-gopala (Balasarasa-Keervani)
3. Kunda-vrunda-makaranda-bindu samabrunda (Madhura-Atana)

Similarly, Sollukattus and Sahityas for them are found in abundance in Oothukkadu's compositions. They are too numerous to mention and further, they should be rendered (or listened to) for full effect, rather than written.

### RAGAMALIKAS AND TILLANAS

The seven Ragamalikas of the composer are again in sweet, mellifluous Tamil.

#### The opening strain

1. Kandum Kanadadupol
2. Ippadiyum Oru Pillai
3. Vazhi Sollu Kurathi
4. Etta Irundu
5. Senru Va Radhe
6. Vishamakkara Kannan
7. Aguvin meede

#### Ragas strung

- Vachaspati, Kedaragowla, Behag, Madhyamavati.
- Darbar, Danyasi, Vasanta, Madhyamavati
- Senjurutti, Nadanamakriya, Madhyamavati, Punnagavarali.
- Latangi, Kuntalavarali, Begada, Atana, Simhendramadhyama.
- Kalyani, Kambhoji, Vasanta,
- Senjurutti, Nadanamakriya, Kuranji, Punnagavarali, Sindhubhairavi.
- Jaganmohini, Arabhi, Gowla, Madhyamavati.



The Kavi's fascination for Rakti Raga and Madhyamavati is seen in the above list also.

Three Tillanas the Kavi has composed have come to light and they are in Surati, Simhendramadhyama and Pu-

raneermai (Senchurutti). Thus the canvas of his compositions does consist of varied hues and pleasant patterns. As a composer and a bhakta, Oothukkadu Venkatasubbier deserves to be better known, propagated and still better sung.

**REFERENCES :**

1. Bhagavata N. K. — Mahakavi Sri Venkatasubbier Divya Charitam (Tamil), Madras, 1968.
2. Bhagavata N. K. — Sri Krishnaganam (Tamil with notation), Madras, 1975.
3. Bhagavata N. K. & Rajagopalan K. R. — Oothukkadu Venkatasubbier's Navaavaranas (Tamil-with notation, Mimeographed), Madras, 1979.
4. Ellarvi — Kalaimamanigal (Tamil), Madras, 1967.
5. Rajagopalan K. R. — Oothukkadu Venkatasubbier, SANGEET NATAK (English), Vol. 51, New Delhi, 1979.
6. Rajagopalan K. R. — Sri Chakra in the Kritis of Dikshitar and Oothukkadu Venkatasubbier, KALAKSHETRA Vol, VII — No. 4 (English) Madras, 1986.
7. The dancing Krishna of Oothukkadu (English) Published by K. N. Perumal Kovil, Oothukkadu, 1986.
8. Number of Souvenir volumes.



**“SHANMUKHA”**

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF SRI SHANMUKHANANDA SABHA

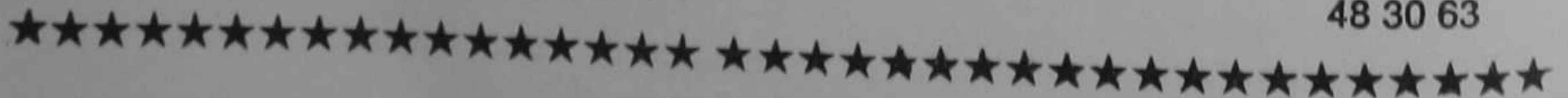
**SUBSCRIPTION RATES**

Life Member (India)	...	Rs. 250/-
Annual for Sabha Member	...	Rs. 20/- (4 issues)
Annual for others	...	Rs. 30/- (4 issues)
Annual for Foreign Subscribers	...	Rs. 500/- (4 issues)
Price per Current issue :	...	Rs. 8/-
Price per Back issue :	...	Rs. 5/-

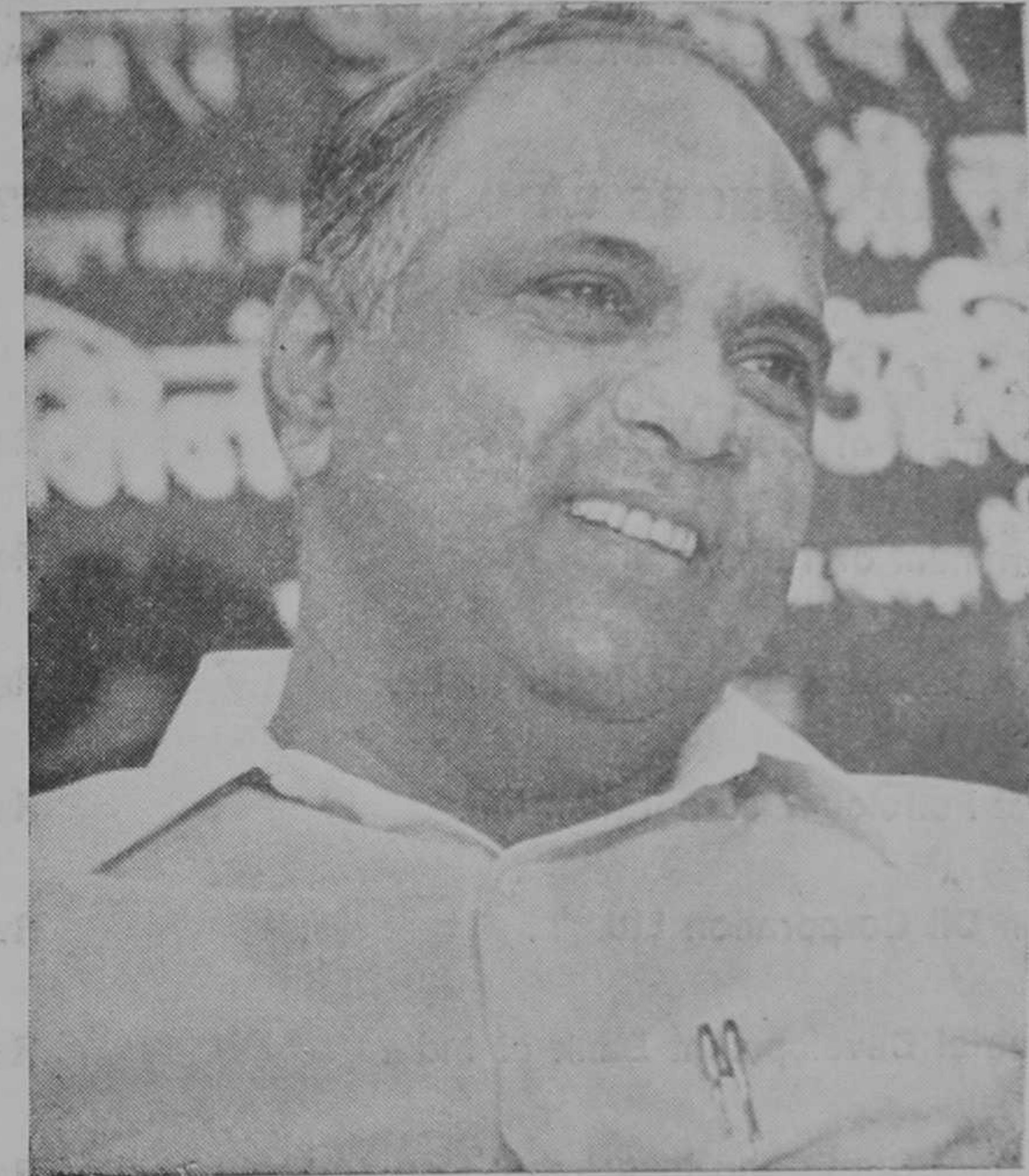
For enrolment etc., please apply to  
SRI SHANMUKHANANDA FINE ARTS & SANGEETHA SABHA  
292, J. Y. Marg, Sion East, Bombay-400 022.

Payment by Demand Draft in  
favour of 'Sri Shanmukhananda  
Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha'.

Phone : 48 24 28  
48 39 78  
48 30 63



**Our Gratitude**



Hon'ble Shri Sharad Pawar

— His Magnanimous Gesture —

Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Bombay, received a shot in the arm as a parting gift from Shri Sharad Pawar, former Chief Minister of Maharashtra, a grant of Rs. 1 crore on behalf of the Government of Maharashtra for the Repair and Restoration Fund of the Shanmukhananda Hall Project, on the eve of his laying down the office to join the Union Cabinet. This fine and magnanimous gesture of Shri Sharad Pawar only lays the emphasis on and importance of the role played by "Shanmukhananda Hall" as the monument of National Integration and Cultural Synthesis throughout the globe, especially in our country and particularly Maharashtra. The gesture also speaks volumes for his



qualities of head and heart and the sympathy and support he has always given for noble causes.

The Sabha is also beholden to the following eminent Institutions among others for their spontaneous Donations indicated below :—

### LIST OF DONORS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED

#### Rs. 50,000/- AND ABOVE

1. Government of India	Rs. 5 lakhs
2. Government of Tamilnadu	Rs. 5 lakhs
3. Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd.	Rs. 5 lakhs
4. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd.	Rs. 5 lakhs
5. Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.	Rs. 3 lakhs
6. Industrial Development Bank of India	Rs. 3 lakhs
7. Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India	Rs. 3 lakhs
8. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.	Rs. 2 lakhs
9. Times of India Relief Fund	Rs. 1.84 lakhs
10. Allana Foundation	Rs. 1.15 lakh
11. Indian Bank	Rs. 1 lakh
12. Citi Bank	Rs. 1 lakh
13. Bombay Dyeing & Mfg. Co. Ltd.	Rs. 1 lakh
14. Jamnalal Bajaj Birth Centenary Celebration Committee	Rs. 0.50 lakh
15. Central Bank of India	Rs. 0.50 lakh

## AN OCEAN UNEXPLORED

By

RAVI KIRAN

(Here goes the prodigy **RAVI KIRAN** rapturous over the compositions of Venkata Kavi with an incisive vision of a musician)

**I**t is typically Indian-style to shroud great personalities by legends and leave them immersed in mystery instead of maintaining facts and happenings of their lives and times. Indian historical sequences are generally drowned in an ocean of mystery — the reasons are plenty but their nature and classification can be best left alone for elucidation by more competent analysts. Suffice to say that a lot of real values have been lost and we are left embracing stories and legends about the greatnesses of persons who for all we know — might never have existed and probing in the dark for facts and figures about those who did. In view of these circumstances, priorities must be well-defined while studying the works and achievements of great men. After all, their merit is the root cause of our interest in them. So we can accept or reject the other details of their lives which range from the near-factual to the absurdly-fantastic.

Sri Venkata Kavi is no exception to this rule. His biographical details are clear about almost everything — except exact facts. Roughly putting the various details together and reading beyond the lines, we have life sketch as follows :

Sri Venkata Kavi is said to have been born in Mannargudi around the beginning of the 18th Century (around 1720, not early 17th as seen in some articles)

to Sri Ramachandra Vathoolar and Smt. Kamalanarayani Ammal, in the Tamil month of Aippasi (Oct.-Nov.) under the asterism Makham (Regulus of Leo constellation). His elder brother 'Kattu Krishna Iyer' was a gifted artiste and a court musician of King Pratapa Simha of Tanjore. The saint-composer had early initiation into music and general education—thanks to his brother (as his parents had ceased to exist when he was very young). However, when he wanted to further his musical education from one of the great men of his times — Sri Krishna Yogi — the latter, for reasons best known only to himself refused.

Consoled by his aunt, who assured him that Lord Krishna would be the best Guru for him, he began singing only in the Lord's presence. In the Narttana Krishna Temple at Oothukkadu (also known as Dhenuswasapuram, Dakshina Gokulam etc.). On one such occasion, he is supposed to have had a complete vision of the Lord in all His Majestic Splendour, which turned him into a great composer. His first composition is believed to be the one in *Begada Idu oru Tiramamo* in Tamil, followed by thousands of others, later.

#### A RECLUSE

Sri Venkata Kavi was a Naishtika Brahmachari, who led a very saintly life, shunning publicity, wealth and



pleasures. He visited a lot of pilgrimage centres composing (songs) on all the major deities, like Krishna (who was his favourite), Rama, Ganesha, Kamakshi, Saraswathi, Kartikeya, etc. (There are also a few compositions on Lord Parthasarathy in Madras). A view is prevalent that he preferred calm places, composing or singing only at nights to avoid crowds.

He chose not to have disciples but there was his brother, Sri Krishna Iyer, who wrote down a lot of his compositions thus preserving them for posterity. Mention also must be made of the Tanjore Nadaswaram player Rudra Pasupati, who learnt the Kavi's compositions on the sly, without the saint's knowledge. One such piece is *Thaye Yashoda* in Todi. Today, the disciples of Needamangalam Krishnamoorthy Bhagavathar, particularly Smt. Alamelu claims possession of about 1000-1500 of the saint's songs. Sri Venkata Kavi appears to have lived for about 60 years and vanished while crossing the Narmada river. There is another school of thought which believes that he lived for 80 to 90 years. However, Alamelu believes that the Vaggeyakara lived only for 32 years.

#### MANY "FIRSTS"

Many 'firsts' could be attributed to Venkata Kavi.

(1) The first to have composed Navavarana krithis. Dikshitar and others emulated him. Venkata Kavi's Navavaranamams are in the fine Sanskrit in praise of Goddess Kamakshi, full of Mantrik and Tantrik details, showing a great command of language as well as Sastras. He selected Rakthi-Ragas like Anandabhairavi, Madhyamavati, etc.

(2) Composed *Saptha* (seven) *Ratnas* first, believed to be the forerunner of Tyagaraja's Pancharatnas.

(3) Perhaps the first to have composed Tillanas and Javalis. Anyway he was the first to make use of Sahityam (words) too in Tillanas. He is said to have composed in all, 90-95 Tillanas of which only a few are available. Of the Javalis, only *Madananga Mohana* in Khamas is in vogue now.

(4) Composed over 1500 songs (there is no one particular belief or information regarding the exact number), which include Varnams, Mallari, Kritis of various types (with only Pallavi and Samashti Charanam; with Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam; with Pallavi, Anupallavi, Charanam, Madhyamakalam, Jatiswaram in various Nadais like Tishram, Khandam etc.....), Tillanas, Arutpas, Slokams, Viruttam, Javali, Kavadi-chindu etc. By far the most prolific composer in terms of variety and range. He composed in many Ragas — at home in any type of raga (be it ghana, naya, rakti etc.) and any type of Tala from the simple Adi to the most complicated ones like Khanda Dhruvam, Khanda Matyam or Sankirna Matyam etc. Facile both in Tamil and Sanskrit. Also composed 10-15 Raga-malikas.

(5) Mudra appears only in *Sri Ramajayamejayam* — (Ramayana-Ragamalika), and *Shankari Sri Rajarajeswari* (Navavaranam in Madhyamavati) as "Venkatakavi".

#### STRUCTURE OF COMPOSITIONS

The wide variety of compositions he had composed, could be conveniently classified into three important types :

- (i) Songs suited for concerts;
- (ii) Songs suited for Dance, Dance-drama etc; &
- (iii) Songs suited for Bhajans and Harikatha.

Of course, some lend themselves to more than one type of presentation. One important characteristic of his compositions apart from the inimitable fluency, is the importance given to Madhyamakalas and Jatiswaras, be it in Sanskrit or Tamil. Later-day composers like Dikshitar too had given Madhyamakala its due share, but in Jatiswaras Venkata Kavi is almost without a parallel not only in enhancing the beauty and the atmosphere he wished to create, but also in conveying meaning from the syllables. This means his imagination was of a very high calibre. All the same it demands the same from us too to perceive his genius. An example : In one of the compositions on Lord Krishna,

ததீங்கிணத்தோம் தரிகிட தா தா தா

(Thadhinkinathom Tharikita Tha Tha Tha) appear. Splitting imaginatively, we get;

ததி (Dadhi) = curd

கிண்ணத்தோம் (Kinnaththom)

= கிண்ணத்தில் (In a cup)

தரிகிட (Tharikita) = பருகிட or அருகிட (To drink/eat)

தா. தா (Tha Tha) = give, give.

meaning : "Give me curd in a cup to drink/eat" (It may sound a bit far-fetched unless we know the context fully-well).

Even otherwise, whatever be our level, we cannot help being captivated by his masterpieces. Thyagaraja is the

closest parallel to this. It is quite possible that the Trinity could have been inspired by Venkata Kavi for he possessed the ease, grace and profound sublimity we see in Tyagaraja, the majesty, grandeur and descriptivity in Sanskrit that we associate with Dikshitar, the totally sublime devotional emotion we are familiar with in Syama Shastri's compositions. Anyway, the structures of Tyagaraja's Pancharatnas and Dikshitar's Navavaranamams lead us to believe that their similarities with the Kavi's outputs are much more than a coincidence.

Regarding the tunes of his Sahityas, it is like any other composer's, — only a few hundreds are in the near-original tune. The reason is the Saint preferred solitude to devotees and disciples and did not teach or write down on his own. So far I have not been able to locate any original manuscripts which his brother is supposed to have written down. Also there are a lot of ambiguities prevailing with respect to some songs. There are other songs like *Rasavilasa* of Kavi in Kambhoji where we also have Swati Tirunal's song with the same title in the same Raga, which, according to Alamelu, has 'many similarities' to the former. There may be spurious compositions attributed to him. Another example is *Mamava Pat-tabhirama* in Manirangu where again the Pallavi of both Venkata Kavi and Muthuswamy Dikshitar are absolutely similar! More thought and research is required in this direction before conclusions can be drawn.

#### SUBTLETIES

There is no doubt about his class as far as Yati, Prasa, Alankara etc., are concerned as well as the selection of right, apt words. He gives a lot of pro-



minence to Swaraksharas (where swara plays the role of Sahitya too). He could co-ordinate the words and tune in a manner designed to highlight the depth of the sentiment he wanted to convey. A great example is found in his Balahamsa Navavaranam where he uses the word, *Mahaneeya Savikalpa Samadhi Sukhavara*. The notes used for *Samadhi* are Sa Maa.. Ga which bring out the very depths of the state of Samadhi (i.e., super consciousness). He brings out the Navarasas very well in his compositions, and uses apt Ragas for his songs too. His ideas are highly original and obviously spontaneous too.

He gave Tamil translation to Bhagavatam, particularly, "Dashama Skandam." Also composed Dhruva, Prahlada and Kuchela Charitram, the Ramayana and many other stories musically. He also composed *Rudra Shabdham*, *Nandanageetam*, *Kalinganarthanapravaham*, *Rajagopala Nityotsavam* etc.

#### MASTER IN LAYA

He was equally good in any Tala, any speed, any Gathi (Nadai). He could bring out complex rhythmic combinations in difficult Talas as well as the sarvalaghu beauty in Adi Tala. In his Navavarana Kriti in Anandabhairavi which is set to Khanda Triputa Talam (9 beats), he has placed a Madhyama Kala (after Anupallavi) divided into four equal parts of 2½ beats each! In another kriti in Kannadagowla, the Pallavi and Anupallavi are in Tishra Gati, the charanam is in Chaturashra Gati, followed by a climax-finish of Chaturashra in Tishra Gati! There are countless instances which bring out such aspects of this great genius.

#### "A NATURAL"

A glance at his compositions reveals that he had a great admiration for Pu-

randaradasa, Jayadeva, Tulasidasa, Namadeva, Tukaram, Periazhvar, Kula-sekharazhvar, the 63 Nayanmars and a host of other great men before his times. Mention and references to them are available in his compositions. He composed lots of songs on the greatness of Guru in spite of (or is it because of?) the fact that he himself did not have a human guru in the real sense of the word. Highly self-effacing type of man as can be seen from the fact that only two of his compositions bear his signature (Mudra). The clarity of his expression is an eloquently silent testimony of his strength of character. His compositions also prove that he was a thoroughly knowledgeable man in musical intricacies, Manthra Shastra, Puranas, Chanda-Alankaras, Grammar of both Sanskrit and Tamil, Layaswaroopa etc. He was however, a 'Natural'.

#### POPULAR KRITIS TODAY

*Thaye Yashoda* (Thodi), *Alaipayude* (Kanada), *Pravanakaram* (Aarabhi), *Kuzhaloodi* (Kambodi), *Aadadu Asan-gadu* (Madhyamavati), *Asaindadum Mayil* (Simhendramadhyamam), *Prema-swaroopa* (Anandabhairavi), *Madhuramadhura* (Atana), *Brindavana Nilaye* (Reetigowla), *Aagamara jagopala* (Kedaram), *Palvadiyum Mukham* (Nattaik-kuranji). *Pullai piravi taravendum* (Chenchurutti) etc. are some of his well-known compositions. However, there are some excellent kritis like the Navavaranam and Saptharatnas whose beauty have to be shared with the public. Thanks to a growing awareness, the future of this great Vaggeyakara's compositions seems to be very bright indeed, and quite a number of them have been propagated of late by musicians and become popular.

## Needamangalam Krishnamoorthy Bhagavathar

KRISHNA GANAM MAESTRO (1921-1982)

Uthukadu is one of the God's creations where melody ruled in all its radiant beauty. Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar (1700-1765) is one of the immortals among musical composers in Tamil and Sanskrit whose songs on Lord Krishna stand unmatched for beauty, fragrance of conception and felicity of composition. Pieces like *Taye Yasoda* (Todi), *Palvadiyum* (Natakurinji) and *Alai Payude* (Kanada) have thrilled thousands. Divine ecstasy, popular appeal, deep emotions and easy-paced Tamil diction coupled with the apt raga swaroopas created by him enthral the elite and the lay. Krishnamoorthy Bhagavathar is a descendent in the sixth generation of Venkatasubba Ayyar's brother.

Krishnamoorthy Bhagavathar (1921-October 1, 1982) kept alive the Uthukadu tradition of divine melody and 'Krishna Consciousness'. Blessed with a melodic, mellifluous voice, conjuring presentation, elegant exposition and direct appeal to the finer sentiments of the audience marked his musical discourses. Initially a vocalist the Sage of Kanchi, the Paramacharyal advised him to take to discourses and the Bhagavathar became the prime mouthpiece of Uthukadu compositions. His discourses were very thrilling but fortune did not smile on him. He did not opt for the usual audience-response expediences. He was very conservative and would not take even a violin. He carried on solo with conviction but it cost him and the art much. Had he taken some accompanists, he would have

dwarfed others but he was destined to be a victim of his own decision.

Son of Gopala Ayyar and Janaki Ammal, he was born at Sembavali in Papanasam Taluk, Tanjavur district and stayed at Needamangalam and used to be called 'Needamangalam Bhagavathar' too. If Krishna was the eighth to his parents, this Krishna too was the eighth to his parents. Probably this too had its impact on him apart from the legacy of the family and his musical leanings and longings in promoting him as the effective instrument for popularising 'Krishna Gana' songs of his illustrious ancestor. It is significant that he was named after the Lord of the Bhagavath Geetha.

He made his debut at Nungambakkam at Madras in his thirtieth year with '*Kishna Ganam*' songs. Authentic presentation with enchanting melodic content, he was described as a re-birth of the illustrious Uthukadu composer. The *Straits Times*, Singapore, (of February 2, 1982) wrote :

'What a shame that men with half his age cannot sing with such sustenance, half as well.'

Krishnamoorthy Bhagavathar has notated most of the songs of Venkatasubba Ayyar and thirty-two songs have been published under the titles :

*Krishna Ganam* and  
*Navavarna Kirtanas*.



Financial constraints deter the publication of the remaining treasure house left to posterity by Venkatasubba Ayyar. Presently Bhagavathar's daughter, V. Alamelu and his sons-in-law, Pandurangam and Sethuraman are propagating the Uthukadu compositions. Bhagavathar has given one L.P. and had visited Singapore. The Paramacharyal of Kanchi had honoured Bhagavathar with the title of 'Krishna Bhaktamani'. Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Trust has honoured him posthumously. Madurai T. N. Seshagopalan gave a public concert at the Tamil Isai Sangham, Madras with Uthukadu songs alone drawing inspiration and guidance from V. Alamelu.

Anyone interested in the publication of the remaining songs of Uthukadu can approach Bhagavathar's wife. The songs satisfy the demands of Bharata Natya and divine melody. It will indeed be a tribute to the stupendous vidwat of Bhagavathar etc.

*(Excerpts from "A Garland" — Book II By N. Rajagopalan, I.A.S. (Retd.), Carnatic Classics, No. 3, 24th Cross Street, Indira Nagar, Madras-20. To be published).*

\* \* \*

Needamangalam Krishnamoorthy Bhagavathar's performing finesse is to be experienced to be believed. He was an artiste, an aesthete and a performer with perception and punch. His Upanyasa on "Krishna Ganam" and "Tyagabrahma Ramayanam" presented long ago at Shanmukhananda is still fresh in memory. A reproduction here of a write-up on the experiences the Bombay rasikas had then may not be out of place.

"With their hearts in their mouths, the audience at Shanmukhananda ... 'watched' Ganesha gyrating in frenzy to the horror of the celestial assemblage, struggling to free himself of the serpent that had taken refuge in his trunk while he himself was lost in excitement over the celestial Siva-Parvathi dance-contest. The inimitable Bhagavathar, Needamangalam Krishnamoorthy, had transported one and all to the Golden Hall of Chidambaram with his resounding overture, "Ananda Narthana Ganapathi Bhavaye" in inspiring Natai.

It later became apparent this dance of Ganesha paved the way for the Naga Natyam, more precisely the Kaliya Natyam or Kalinga Narthanam in the Lord's Krishna avatar. The composition depicting the episode, a creation of Uthukkadu Venkata Subbier, the master pace-spinner, described in gripping gait the fight between the little Krishna and the ferocious Kalinga and its final defeat. The soulful rendition of the whole sequence by the Bhagavathar was listened to with rapt attention.

Hailing in the lineage of Uthukkadu Venkata Kavi of the 17th century who has also been a source of strength and inspiration, Needamangalam Krishnamoorthy's Upanyasa has crisp objectivity and a directness of style that at once endears him to the listeners. His voice has the twinkling radiance and vigour, its resilience and refinement inferior to no concert veteran. He is no alien to Hindustani style either. His percussive ingenuity would match any of the star-performers. And he could conduct a session of musical narrative without aid or accompaniment.

On both the sessions, 'Krishna Ganam' and "Tyagabrahma Ramayanam", he covered a wide range of subjects. With sizzling punch he drew parallels from history and the Puranas. Such was his intense introspection and profundity that he performed as one

possessed — an experience to be gone through.

Incidentally, his interpretation of the composition **Muthukrishna Memudham** in Senchuruti and its import made it quite clear that the sophisticated form of kriti had taken shape long before the advent of the Musical Trinity.

Ramayana is a theme that never stales. In the Tyagabrahma Ramayanam, the Bhagavathar establishes that Saint Tyagaraja was Valmiki reborn with a mission of recomposing, the epic in "Naya" sangeetham."

It is heartening to note that the family members of the Bhagavathar have come forward to let the 'gems' of Oothukkadu Kavi, to be published. Bhagavathar was so sacredly preserving them and jealously guarding them (to be published only by himself) that he refused to allow them to be 'nationalised' when a Central Government Organisation proposed to publish them.

KINNARI

## VIJAYA CLEARING SERVICES PVT. LTD.

18/33, IDA MANSION,  
VAJU KOTAK ROAD,  
BALIARD ESTATE,  
BOMBAY-400 038.

Telephones : 261 72 18 — 411 07 39 — 555 35 01 Grams : LUCAAFTER  
261 59 11  
262 28 31

CUSTOM HOUSE AGENTS

"BRANCH"

No. 5, Jayant Chambers,  
Gandhidham, Kandla,  
Kutch.

Tel. : 22650 — 23677



# LAYA IN RAGA\*

By

Prof. R. VISWESWARAN

Laya in its spectrumatic meaning and application is fundamental to all creative activity in art and is thus a foundational concept for the philosophy of aesthetics and operates as rhythm in a broad sense. In music — in Karnatak music which is the immediate concern of this lecture — two kinds of rhythm are in action : One is the Temporal Rhythm which makes its aesthetic impact through musical compositions with Tala, and through Tana by a beat-rhythm sometimes constant and sometimes varied. The other one is the Tonal Rhythm which operates in music in a subtler manner without the need of the beat rhythm and which in fact is the cause for substance in music by functioning through the tonal pitches. This is my "Tone-Time Relativity Theory". I call this 'Laya in Raga' which I have always felt as more fundamental to understanding the basic substance of music than as a combination of two different concepts, Raga and Laya.

## AESTHETICS OF RAGA

The concept of the raga is the most beautiful gift of the Indian musician to world music. Conceptions of ragas have, however, gone on changing from time to time because of the nature of Desi Sangita which art-music is :

*Dese Dese janaanaam yad ruchya  
hrdaya ranjakam !*

\*A Special Lecture delivered at the Decennial Celebrations, Taalavadyotsav '91, of the Percussive Arts Centre, Bangalore, to be published by the Indian Musicological Society, Baroda.

*Gitam Vaadanam ca nrttam tad  
desityabhidheeyate !!*

Our great ragas — as we understand them today — handed down to us from about the time of Purandaradasa live resplendently in the all-time-great Lakshyas of the Musical Trinity and a generation or two before them. Transmitted by rote in the guru-sishya parampara, the tonal and aesthetic content of these ragas have been unquestionably and unquestioningly accepted without a need for conscious dissection and analysis to understand the differences in the aesthetic and emotional impact of one raga from those of the others. Yet, such an analysis to understand the aesthetics of the ragas in terms of its ingredients including the factor of time, is exciting, thrilling and rewarding though, it must be conceded, music is mostly an intuitive process. This paper is a humble but sincere attempt in this direction, though, I am not able to put across a tenth part of what needs to be expressed owing to time constraints.

## A SWARA-LAYA MIX

The personality of a raga results from an optimal combination of the following :

Swara is the skeletal frame. Appropriate phrasings, the sancharas, with movements in vastly varying Layas or speeds are its limbs and musculature. Discrete and sensitive ap-

plication of gamaka for each of its swaras is its nervous system. Bhava which results from all this is the sense organs and complexion. Rasa is the breath and heart-beat which is the life of the raga. Dislocation in any one of these is sure to damage the ultimate i.e., rasa which is the life of the raga.

The importance of swaras of varying lengths in phrasings in vastly varying speeds or Layas for *Ragabhivayakti* needs no emphasis. Movement of phrases or swaras in mono-laya results in monotony and *ragatva* ceases to exist.

Proper punctuation which is but an aspect of laya is equally important. Whereas punctuation in compositions is somewhat rigid, punctuation in alapana and swara kalpana is flexible, still assuring *ragatva* and bhava, because it is in the nature of beauty to allow for a degree of subjectivity giving rise to styles in music.

## INHERENT LAYA OF RAGAS

A wide-range-mixture of varying Layas for phrases thus being a basic necessity of ragas for their proper contours, there is yet a general inherent Laya that characterises certain ragas for *bhavabhivayakti*.

While most of our ragas accept a medium tempo and many of our major ragas like Todi, Kalyani, Bhairavi, Mohana, Madhyamavati, Shankarabhavana, Kambhoji, Kamavardhini etc. etc., accept multi-tempo, some ragas like Phalamanjari, Amrtavahini, Gurjari, Gundakriya, Budharanjani, Malavi, Navaratnavilasa etc. — scores of them in fact — sound well and are acceptable only in a medium plus and fast

tempo. Predominance of short swaras and lack of long, sustaining swaras around which the raga can be woven are the main reasons for the tempo which reduces these ragas to tunes with very limited scope for elaboration. Short and fast compositions in these ragas by the Musical Trinity and later composers are ample testimony to this observation.

Now, on the other hand, great creations like Ahiri, Neelambari, Yadukula-Kambhoji, Anandabhairavi, Punnagavali etc., make their desired impact essentially because of a slow tempo or pace which is provided for by the long, sustaining swaras, elongated phrases, long glides or the *Ullasita* gamaka and so on. These ragas are like the highways with abundant beauty on either side but with all the implications of a ghat-section on which the drivers cannot, should not and dare not speed up. The great masterpieces in such ragas by the Trinity mostly in Vilamba Kala speak volumes for *their* intuition about the inherent slow laya of these ragas.

## LAYA IN GAMAKA

Gamaka plays a vital role in giving life and the particular aesthetic entity to a raga. Few are the ragas in Karnatak music like Garudadhvani, Ham-sanandi, Sunadavinodini, Kalyanavasantana, Hindola etc., which do not sound bad even if their swaras are held plain or if there is a small abuse of gamaka when employed, and this is because of their swara-relationships. The substance of Karnatak music, however, is contained in our major ragas (so classified) and ragas like Saveri, Begada, Nayaki, Yadukula Kambhoji, Dhanyasi etc., in which gamaka with its precise and proper application is of topmost importance.



Raga assassins can have a very easy go at them !

Some of the gamakas function essentially on the basis of their laya-implying duration.

Thus, the gamakas Kampita, Lina, Plavita and Andolita operate as separate gamakas and are enumerated as such by our ancient theorists because of the progressive reduction in the speed of the oscillation of the swara.

The behaviour of Sadharana, Gandhara and Kaisiki Nishada oscillating in Andolita gamaka in different ragas is itself a very fascinating study. They allow for the maximum variety in the application of gamaka and hence for a very wide range of colours. In all these cases it is the difference of laya of oscillation, the short or long use of the main swara or the anuswara, jerky or non-jerky oscillation of the swara that make the difference in the look of the swaras which causes the difference in the aesthetic impact and hence the difference among allied ragas.

Thus,

1. The Andolita Gandhara in Bharavi is an oscillation between **ma** and **ri**, uniform, non-jerky and ends in **ri** before proceeding to **ma** or **pa** or **da** or **ni** in different phrases :

2. Look at the Gandhara in andolita in Durbar :- The oscillation being still between **ma** and **ri**, the stay in **ri** is for a longer duration than in the earlier instance. With the added peculiarity to this jerky motion that the oscillation ends up in **ma** for a short duration before proceeding to 'ri sa' or 'sa ri sa'.

3. The same Sadharana Gandhara behaves so differently in Nayaki, — again, because of a difference in Laya in its oscillation/gamaka which in this instance is Dvi-swara-Vali. Ga starts at **ri**, jumps to **ma**, comes

down half way to **ga**, jumps to **ma** again and returns to **ri**, again a jerky movement totally sounding as "reema gaa ma ri".

4. The same **ga** in a jerky motion in Athana sounds as marecemareema — risa. A difference of Laya in gamaka interchanges the places of main swara and anuswara.

I have tried to establish the importance of Laya in a few gamakas and for one swara which renders its shape and colour different in the different ragas it figures in, giving peculiarity and character to those ragas. You can imagine the importance of Laya when it operates on most of the gamakas for the 14 + 2 swara sthanas with respective applicabilities.

#### LENGTH OF SWARA SIGNIFICANT

Optimal length or duration of swaras in phrases is yet another fascinating study :

For example, take the phrase 'srgrs'. Rendered without lengthening any swara, the phrase is common to Bhairavi and Anandabhairavi. Rendered as 'Sa r g r i s' it fits in Bhairavi well. Rendered as 'Sa r g a a a r i i i s a' it is the property of Anandabhairavi.

Again, look at the important and characterising phrase 'r g m g a a a m r' in Kedaragowla. The shortness of **ga m r g m** in the beginning is crucial and though **r g m** is a prohibited sanchara, it gets the sanction because of the shortness of **ga** and at the end of the phrase shortness of **ma** after the characterising long **ga** is significant. If this **ma** is lengthened, it takes the shade of Sahana.

Again, it is the minimally short duration of **ga** and **ni** that gives its character to Arabhi.

## Some Less-known Aspects of the Compositions of Tyagaraja

By

Prof. K. R. RAJAGOPALAN

### TALAS

It is rarely, if ever, that much analysis is made of the 'Tala' aspect of songs. This is rather surprising, because rhythm must have preceded music as such — even from very early times. It is easy to keep time to the 'beats' even if one does not appreciate the niceties or otherwise of the music presented! Drums, of sorts, were the earliest musical instruments all over the world, followed perhaps by wind instruments like the flute, and, later, stringed instruments must have come into vogue, after metals were discovered and worked upon.

There are about 700 songs of Tyagaraja for which the first words, name of the raga and the tala are available. (Refer this author's alphabetical listing of all Tyagaraja's compositions in *Journal of Music Academy*, Madras. Almost half of them are set to Adi Tala only. There are a hundred each belonging to Rupaka and Chapu Talas. Among the rest, Desadi and Madhyadi Talas account for another hundred. The rest are rather few in number. Full details are given below :

Tala	Number of songs
Adi	333
Rupaka	109
Chapu	94
Desadi	93
Jhampa	34
Tripata	20
Madhyadi	10

Tisra Laghu	7
Eka	2
Ata Tisra, Ata, Khanda Laghu one each	3
Total	705

In Rangaramanuja Ayyangar's books where 690 songs are listed both Madhyadi and Desadi Talas are referred to under 'Adi' invariably, since the number of 'beats' are the same. Similarly Tripata and Chapu Talas also get listed together, as both have the same seven beats, Rupaka and Tisra Laghu also can be put together. Clubbing such together, we get a condensed table given below :

Tala	Number of songs
Adi	436
Rupaka	116
Chapu	114
Rest	41

The first tala has eight 'beats', the second has six beats (usually 'shortened' to three only) and the third seven beats (usually 'shortened' to three and a half). One would like to know why Adi Tala should not conveniently be shortened likewise to four beats! (Note that Jhampa Tala is supposed to have 10 'counts' but is invariably shortened to 2½ beats). Fortunately, or otherwise, Ata Tala continues to be counted as 14 units still.



## RAGAS

Tyagaraja, like other composers also had a penchant for Suddha Madhyama ragas alone. As many as six hundred belong to this variety. Among the hundred odd songs of the Prati Madhyama-variety, 28 belong to Kalyani raga (and its derivatives) and 13 to Kamavardhani or Pantuvarali.

This great composer has handled more than 200 ragas. The more prolific ragas are the following as many discerning rasikas could vouchsafe by their constant listenings to the AIR or live concerts : Kalyani (20), Sankarabharanam (30), Todi (29), Bhairavi (19).

What might surprise many would be some of the following details : There are as many as fourteen songs in Varali and twentyone in Sourashtra, which are rarely heard in concerts. Tyagaraja appears to have had almost an equal fascination for both Arabhi (14) and Devagandhari (13). Rarely does one come across an exposition of the latter raga and of a song different from *Ksheera Sagara Sayana* (made famous by Mysore Raja Ayyangar on the disc.) Saveri Raga accounts for 19 songs and Madhyamavati has fifteen. Apart from *Alakalella*, *Vinayakuni* and *Ramakathasudha*, one does not easily recollect other songs in Madhyamavati. There are three songs in that rare raga 'Ahiri' — which Ariyakudi invariably used to include in his Ragamalikas.

Taking both Raga and Tala together into account, it is found that nearly 600 songs have come down to the present day in the same Raga and Tala from published sources. The earliest is

Chinnaswamy Mudaliar's book of 1890's and the latest is *Sree Tyagarajaswami Keerthanaigal* (1967) by Sadguru Sangeetha Samajam, Madras. This shows that traditionally much change has not come about during the last nearly 100 years as far as these two aspects of the songs are concerned. At the other end of the spectrum, there are 120 ragas in which only one song has been composed !

## 'STRUCTURE' OF THE SONGS

Quite a number of songs contain all the three anga-s viz., Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charana or Charanas. Some contain Pallavi and a series of Charana-s only. (Under Muthuswamy Dikshitar's songs, such songs are classified as having 'Samashti-Charana'). All the Divyanama Keerthanas belong to the latter type and are meant more for joint singing or bhajans. They usually contain not less than four Charanas. (Dikshitar's songs, rarely have more than one Charana).

Earlier composers like Purandara-dasa and Tallapakkam Annamacharya have also attached a number of Charana-s, to their songs. Invariably, all the charana-s are sung to the same 'Dhatu' or tune. Three appears to be the more favourite number of Charana-s for Tyagaraja and he has composed 184 pieces of this variety. Under the Divyanama type, the number of charana-s varies mostly between six and ten.

This is a short analysis of a few aspects of the genius of Tyagaraja, attempted by one who pay his 'numerical' homage to the memory of that great Saint !

## EVOLUTION OF MRUDANGAM\*

By

B. M. SUNDARAM

Music is everywhere and no one can do without it. Ancient religious beliefs maintained that music was not only a pleasure, an entertainment, but also, a cause of many events. It could control all the five elements, since it is Divine. It has also helped to draw people together and make them feel as one. Indian Music is considered as very old, compared to many other systems in the globe. Percussion is a category of music and plays a very vital role in bringing out the excellence of music. Any instrumental music, above all, is rhythmic, the reason being, rhythm is inherent in all bodily movement, including the heartbeat. Rhythm is the most essential element in music, because it is a product of time and without rhythm, there can be no music.

### PERCUSSIVE ART — UNIVERSAL

Sound emanates from the voice or the instrument. The pleasing nature of it, as also otherwise, lies in its vibrations. The distance between one vibration and the other, is purely rhythm. While melodic intervals give a vertical or 'up and down' movement, the form is established by rhythm. Vocal music is appreciated only by the people, who know the language, in which it is rendered and hence, Regional. Other instrumental music is appreciated only by those who belong to the country or part of the country

and who know the particular system of music. Therefore, it is National. On the other hand, rhythmic or percussive music could well be enjoyed by artistes of any nation. If you recite or sing the swaras, for instance, to an Englishman, naturally he finds himself at crossroads. Whereas, if the rhythmic solfa syllables are uttered or played, to a percussion artiste of any foreign country, he is able to understand the beats, the rhythm. Hence, the percussive art, may rightly be called as universal.

### DANCE & PERCUSSION

Rhythm pervades the universe. Among all the musical instruments, only the percussive instruments have been stated by scholars, to be the earliest. Thus, they represent the most primitive category of musical instruments. The primary use of percussion is associated with the dance, in which, the sound is made in response to or to emphasise bodily movement. The dancers of the pre-historic era, used to stamp the ground, gently or violently or clap their hands. We are given to understand, stamping pits were also there in Solomon Islands. Rattles, used by magicians, from time immemorial were also rhythmic instruments, though not refined and sophisticated. The Sistrum was quite popular in Ancient Egypt, Rome, Mesopotamia and so on. Striking a rock with a stone, to produce rhythmic sound, was also not uncommon.

\*Paper presented at the Talavadyotsav '91 of Percussive Arts Centre, Bangalore, to be published by Indian Musicological Society, Baroda.



In India, plenty of percussive instruments have come down, from the earliest period of history, like the Mrudangam, Dolu, Jhallari (or Khanjari), Ghatam etc. Generally, all the percussive instruments fall into two kinds : Tunable instruments and those of indefinite pitch. Many instruments have vanished, due to passage of time. Right from their usage in Folk and Tribal forms of music, many percussive instruments, gradually underwent the process of evolution and attained a very refined form and status. Among these, let us see, at least to some extent, about Mrudangam.

#### ORIGIN

Natya Sastra says that Mrudangam was a creation of Sage Swati. As is told therein, Swati, once, during an intermission of studies, in a rainy season, went to a lake, to fetch water; Indra caused torrential downpour; wind made clear sounds on the leaves of the Lotus; Swati keenly observed it — the high, medium and low sounds — and returned to his hermitage and devised the Mrudangam and the Pushkaras, with the help of Viswakarma. Later, he made other drums also, such as, Jhallari, Pataha etc., and covered them with hide. (Ch. 33-5 to 13).

An old treatise on music, entitled ANUMA BHARATAM (Tamil) gives another version about the origin of Mrudangam. A demon by name mrudangan, caused great anger to Vayu, who attacked the demon and tore him to pieces and threw the body on the peaks of Mt. Kailas. Nandikesvara took the head of the demon, made both sides flat, covered them with tiger's hide and played on it. Thus the instrument came to be known as Mrudangam. Nandikesvara, according to Puranas

and Agamas, has played only Maddalam and it was only Vishnu, who first handled the Mrudangam, at the time of Siva's dancing. Anyway, Mrudangam is, doubtlessly, an old instrument. Mrudangam, Maddalam, Sallikai (or Jhallari or the present Khanjari), Karatika, Bheri, Pataha and Kudamuzha (the Panchamukha Vadya) are, according to another early work, *Suddhananda Prakasam*, the first seven percussive instruments, that appeared.

*"Taritha Mirudangamodu mattalam Salli Perutta Karatikaiye Bheri — Uratta Pataham Kudamuzhavam paangaya ezhum Adaive mudarkaruviyam."*

It is to be pointed out here that Mrudangam and Maddala are not one and the same, as is generally considered. The above verse gives 'Mrudangam and Maddalam' — "*Mirudangamodu Mattalam*".

*Silappadhikaram*, a Sangam classic, allots some verses, exclusively to describe the qualifications of a Mrudangam player. Mrudangam is older than the Maddala. The latter came into existence only in about 4th or 5th century, A.D. There is a sloka that speaks about these instruments, distinctively.

*Maddaletyati susabda: marddalam Mrudaravena susabdena Mrudangaka: !!*

Maddala is that which produces the sounds, 'Mad' and 'Dalam', while very gentle and soft sounds are produced on the Mrudangam.

*'Bharata Kalpalata Manjari' says : Puraamuraasuram hatvaa Bhagavan Bhaktavatsala : !*

*Tal Kalevaram aadaaya marddalam Krutavaan Prabhu : !!*

A work called *Mrudanga Puranam*, gives the same, but with a slight variation in the wordings :

*Puraamuraasuram bhitvaa Bhagavan Devakeesuta : !  
Tatkalevaram aadaaya marddalam Krutavaan bhuvi !!*

A Linga found near the Markandeya shrine in the Ekambresvara Temple at Kancheepuram is named 'Maddala Madhavan'.

It is believed that Mrudangam is the personification of the Trimurtis and the Dhyanasloka praises as :

*Moortitraya swaroopaaya  
Mrudangaaya Namonnama : !*

Vedas and Puranas extol the greatness of Mrudangam. Agamas, which describe the temple rituals, mention Mrudangam, as an instrument associated with the worshipping service.

"Tannumai" is the Tamil name for mrudangam, used in ancient literature. Sangam literature dated between 715 B.C. and 235 B.C. mentions Tannumai :

1. 'Pookko ! eya Tannumai' (*Ahananooru*),
2. 'Vishiyuru Tannumai' and 'Arikkural Tannumai' (*Purananooru*);
3. 'Arinar Tannumai' (*Malaipadukadam*);
4. 'Madivai Tannumai' (*Perumpatrappadai*);
5. Tannumaikkaruvium Tazhteenkuzhalum' (*Manimekhalai*);
6. 'Mattari Tadari Tannumai' (*Paripadal*) ....

There are plenty of such references. 'Arikkural' means 'speedy passages'

like 'farans' feature in the Tannumai. 'Ari' is the term used in ancient Tamil to denote syllables played at an incredible speed, like the sound of a Jet plane. 'Madivai' indicates that the instrument has a folded piece of hide, which, we now call 'Vettu Tattu'.

At one time, Mrudangam was a drum, whose body itself was a mud cylinder, which had leather stretched over its face. Vinayavijaya, a Jain writer and a commentator on the *Kalpa Sutra* of Bhadrabahu, says that both Panava and Mrudangam were made of earth.

*Panavo mrutpataha : murajo marddala : !*

*Mrudango mrunmaya : sa eva !!*

'Natya Sastra' says, *Mrunmayatvad Mrudangastu.*" (33:273). According to *Sangeeta Ratnakara*, the name Mrudanga originally applied by Bharata to the drum called 'Pushkara'.

*Proktam mrudanga sabdena muninaa Pushkaratrayam (6:1025).*

Pushkara was not in vogue during the times of Sarangadeva. Sage Bharata mentions about the black coloured paste applied on the mrudangam, which we say 'maarjana' or 'Saadam'. But, in his times, the maarjana was made of pure earth — Mrut — and that is why, the instrument acquired the name, Mrudanga, according to scholars like Dr. V. Raghavan. This instrument has sixteen holes — the eyes — on its leather of the playing sides, through which, stripes are introduced and tightened. By about the 6th century, A.D., it had only eight holes. Tirugnanasambandar, the 'Dravida Sisu' and the great Saivaite saint mentions in one of his 'Tevaram' hymns :



"Kattuvadam Ettumuru  
Vattamuzhavattil Kottu karam  
Ittaroli ..."

The initial lesson taught to a student of mrudangam is the four basic syllables — Ta, dhi, Tom and Nam. But, in reality, there are seven basic syllables, corresponding with the seven notes in a gamut. '*Pancha Marabu*', a Tamil work on music, also of the last Sangam period, gives these seven syllables — Ta, dhi, tom, nam, jhum, ki, ta. The Tavil (Dolu) artistes of the by gone days used to teach only these seven syllables, to the beginners, in a varied order — *Tom-ki-ta-nam-ta-dhi-jham*.

#### FIVE ELEMENTS ABSORBED

Mrudangam has a greatness by being an instrument, possessing all the five elements — Panchabhootas. The rightside (Valamtalai) always has Agni; the left (Toppi) has water; the barrel, made out of earth or out of the wood that stems from the earth; the sound vibrates by air and the inner portion of the barrel, which is hollow, has the space (Akasa).

Mrudangam was used only for Dancing and Devotional music, in temples. The mode and technique of playing for a Bharatanatya is unique and included many jatis etc., evolved by Natyacharyas. It may well be observed that '*Kitataka Tarikitatom*' played on the mrudangam in a dance recital, differs in the execution of the same, in other programmes. After the advent of Kathakalakshepam, the mrudangam assumed the role of a competent accompaniment to it. We must keep in mind that there were no professional music recitals, except in the palaces, until the 19th century. Maharashtrians, who domici-

led to Tanjavur, during the rule of the Marathas, enunciated a special manner of playing for a Musical Discourse, with Chepu, Araichapu, Gumki, Tekka etc. Playing for the 'Usi' talas (syncopated rhythmic structures) — 'Ezhadi usi', 'Anjadi usi' and so on — was a remarkable feature. Now, this has disappeared, since using 'usi' in Kathakalakshepam itself have gone obsolete. A similar 'usi' type of playing is evident in Bharatanatya, even today, at least, when the dancer executes some introductory 'adavus', particularly at the commencement of a Varna. It was the custom to play this 'usi' type, while the 'Tatti mettu' adavus are rendered. The Nattuvanar also weilds the cymbals, at that time, in the same fashion of the adavus.

#### AS A CONCERT ACCOMPANIMENT

Mrudangam came to take part in music concerts, only when public recitals came into existence. It is said, Coimbatore Raghavayyar (1825-1876) was the first to usher music on to the public platform. The earliest traceable name of a mrudangam artiste, at least, in the Tanjavur area or broadly speaking, in Tamilnadu, is of Heeroji Gopal Rao (1762-1840). He was a palace vidwan and also a prominent Lavani artiste. He attained proficiency in composing and singing Lavanis, under the tutelage of Syed Umar Vastad (1755-1824), a senior contemporary of Saint Tyagaraja. Next, we come across, in the Tanjavur palace records, the name of Kamakshi Bai, a lady mrudangist. On a Vijayadasami day, the king had honoured her by presenting three rupees! Sivaswami Appa, Gopal Rao Appa and Guruvappa were some other mrudangam players of the Maratha

period. Narayanaswami Appa (1847-1916) became a celebrity in that field and we talk about him, even this day. He was a disciple of Sivaswami Appa and Gopal Rao and commenced his career in the Kathakalakshepams of Mannargudi Bava Swami, son of 'Kokilakantha' Meruswami, who lived in the court of Maharaja Swati Tirunal. Then he became the stock accompanist to the 'Harikatha Pitamaha', Tanjavur Patti Krishna Bhagavatar and later switched over to the concert dais, in the company of Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer and Patnam Subramania Iyer. He was an excellent vocalist too. But, during the times of Narayanaswami Appa, Tanjavur Pakkiri, Tukaram, Babu Rao and many others, mrudangam playing was not at all mathematics-oriented.

#### THE PLACE OF TAVIL

Tavil or Dolu is another percussion instrument, originally meant to support Nagaswaram music and had a place only in temple rituals. Since the instrument happened to be one that cannot be tuned nor possesses a definite pitch, the artistes concentrated more on mathematics-based rhythmic execution to exhibit their own talent and skill. Influenced by them, the later day mrudangam players also evinced interest in turning their attention to complex rhythmic patterns, but, to present only during the short spells of their solos, in the midst of a progressing concert, unlike the present day.

Today, we hear, cross-rhythmic and complicated phrases, in excess, even while a song is rendered. Supporting the main musician, elevating the recitals to heights, playing only the apt phrases in proper places, have all become a forgotten features. The cult of

self projection and dominating the stage have gained momentum, among many. 'Sarvalaghu' has become archaic. Even without touching the subject of Mathematics, many mrudanga vidwans, have carried away their audience, merely by their soft, delicate and vibrant technique of playing.

#### LAYA BRAHMAM MANPOONDIA

The credit of introducing rhythmic feats, in a well-proportioned and fitting manner, goes to the 'Laya Brahmam', Pudukottai Manpoondia Pillai. He was a Khanjari vidwan and, in fact, it was he who brought that instrument to the concert dais and elevated its status. Not only that. It was he who introduced and appended a 'Muktayi' (Tadinginatom) to the Mohara. The Khanjira, from then on acquired the second place, next to the mrudangam, till date, though in his own times and that of his illustrious disciple, Pudukottai Dakshinamurthi Pillai, the Khanjari occupied the first place and commenced the Tani. Born in the year 1857, Manpoondia Pillai was a 'precision-bound' rhythmist. The main artistes also, slowly, equipped themselves with cross-rhythmic exercises, to enjoy their due share, when teaming with stalwarts like Manpoondia Pillai. Iluppur Ponnuswami Pillai, a violinist and the maternal uncle of the Tavil maestro, Panjami, was extremely adept in complex rhythmic structures. Manpoondia Pillai, mostly paired with him. Namakkal Narasimha Iyengar (29.4.1836 — 17.5.1924) and Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Iyer (2.3.1880 — 5.4.1921) may be said, as the first vocalists among few others, to have devoted their acumen to intricate exercises in Laya. When Mannargudi Pakkiri Pillai (1867 — 2.11.1937), the Konnakol wizard, who hailed from a family



of Natyacharyas and who himself was earlier a Taval vidwan, joined hands with Manpoondia Pillai, in a number of concerts, abundant rhythmic patterns became a sumptuous feast to the listeners. Such manipulations in Laya, evoked a sustained interest among the audience. Manpoondia Pillai passed away on 10.1.1921, Pushya Bahula Panchami day.

Kancheepuram Naina Pillai (25.7.1889 — 2.5.1934) was another incomparable vocalist, whose recitals were based more on 'Laya Vyavahara' Palani Muthayya Pillai, who was also originally a Taval vidwan, became the disciple of Manpoondia Pillai. He may be claimed to be the first mrudangam artiste to present more criss-cross rhythmic feats, on the mrudangam.

#### NEW FACELIFT

The advent of Tanjavur Vaidyanatha Iyer gave a facelift to the art of mrudangam playing, adding hue and colour with mathematically complicated passages, while equally retaining the supportive and concert-elevating aspect. Whenever the Mrudangam artiste happened to hear the solo playing by any renowned Taval vidwan, he used to absorb and assimilate the thrilling 'Vyavahara' and include them in his own performances. Kuttalam Kuppaswami Pillai was another mrudangist and a master of 'Vyavahara'. Palani Subramania Pillai, son of Muthayya Pillai, (and in whose revered memory, an award has been rightly instituted by the Percussive

Arts Centre), was an outstanding and unsurpassing mrudanga vidwan. It is needless to say, he was always 'at home' in supporting the main artiste, as well as, in rhythmic marvels. Tinniyam Venkatarama Iyer was yet another 'Vyavahara' mrudangist. Palghat Mani Iyer, as we all know, was non-pareil in his art. It was only due to his exemplary mastery and inimitable virtuosity, the status and rank of both the Mrudangam and the Mrudangam player rose to pinnacles.

The art of Mrudangam, as I see today, has, no doubt, reached great heights, but only in its complicated rhythmic side. As said earlier, the supporting aspect, being a faithful accompaniment, the 'Sarvalaghu' playing, have all completely become a rarity. At the same time, there are one or two vidwans still among us, who possess the qualifications of a real mrudanga vidwan. It is high time that young and upcoming mrudangists turned their attention, to peep into that 'supporting' side, only for which, the very instrument came into existence.

'Layagnana' will pave way to 'manolaya'. 'Tala Bekku, Takka Mela Beku' — pronounced the Sangeeta Pitamaha. Tyagarajaswami questioned, 'Maddala tala gatulanu teliyaka — mardinchuda sukhamam?'. Mrudangam, which has been listed, in sastras, as one fit to be seen, when one gets up from sleep, is originally meant only for accompaniment and hence should be 'Sogasuga'. Pushing away its individuality and making it as a Taval have to be discarded.

## SAHITYA OF THUMRI-II\*

By

CHANDER SHEKHAR PANT

In the Thumri, some deep-rooted sentiment, some typical situation or phase or temperament of the common folk, of the rural area is very often taken up. It is given a literary shape in the regional dialect already referred to, and expressed in its musical and emotional syntax. All taboos and restraints are lifted. Eroticism and love releases itself in all its feminine sense and sensibility, in feminine delicacy and fury, with all its twists and turns, with all its spasmodic twitches of the wrist, of the waist, jinglings of the ghungru, cracking of the bangles and the jerky pulling of the garment. There are charges and counter-charges. The darts of cupid are hurled mercilessly. The glances are the veritable shafts of sharp-edged daggers, the heart is wounded and it bleeds, jealousies and wailings and all the sallies and fitful whims and caprices of love stalk the scene.

There is no law but the unrestricted wooing. The Nayika is seldom Sweeya. It is *Samanya* or *Parakeeya*. A stranger comes and casts the magic spell and lo! the maiden of Banaras is set all on flame by this casual meeting : —

*Pardesi Balam kaisa jaadu daara.*

Such is the world of fantasy wherein the Thumri composer takes his flights and dreams. He is tired of the gran-

deur and majesty, of the restraint and decorum of the Dhrupad, he has had the surfeit of the sophistications and mannerisms of the Khyal with its never ending vocal gymnastics. He is tired of paying his homage and tribute to saptasur to "Teen Grama" to "Ekais Murchhana", "Unanchasa Kootatan", he no longer claims to swim across the unfathomable "Nadasagar" and there are no chances, therefore, of his getting drowned.

We may note here, that one of the functions of art, in the words of Walter Pater, consists "in the removal of surplusage, from the last finish of the gem-engraver-blowing away the last particle of invisible dust." And "the artist may be known," as Schiller said, "rather by what he omits".

Even when he is in devotion, it will be a devotion to a personal god of the cowherd and the milk-maid, and that devotion will have a context of sport and dalliance and will be garbed in unostentatious speech. Thus Sanad Piya, another composer of Lucknow would put these words in the mouth of a maiden :

*Kaisi ye bhalaayere kanhaye,  
paniyan bharat mori gagari girayi  
karke laraayi!*

\*Paper read at the AIR Symposium, 1962. The first part of the article appeared in SHANMUKHA, July 1991.



Sanad, kahe aiyso teet bhayo  
kanhayi, kaa karun maayi  
nahip maanat kanhayi karat laray !

Or another composer would say :—  
Naahi parat maikaa chain Saavariya  
naahi parat maikaa chain !

Even when the charm and spell of Krishna's flute is expressed, the Thumri singer and composer will have his own way. It will not be like the great Kalawant Baiju Bawara who composed and sang in the Raga Shankara, with all its grandeur and majesty —

Bansi naad sur saadh ke bajay  
Praveen kanhayi Sapta sur madhur  
taan ghunj mani  
Baiju kahe Prabhu Narnaari  
Pasupanchi,  
Mohe aur mohe sur nar muni !!

Some anonymous Thumri composer would express his feelings as follows in Pilu.

Kalejava ke bansuri ki ghun laagee  
Hon apne ghar kaam karat rahi  
Shravan sunat ut bhagi, he Sakhi,  
Shravan ut bhagi !!

Take another theme for comparison — the eyes. A Khayal in Multani has words : *Nainan me aanbaa kaunsi pari re*. Mian Tansen once expressed the unfathomable depth and pathos which he saw in the eyes of a maiden coming to tears in a Dhrupad in the Raga Vihag:

Rumjum bhar aayi veri naina tehare  
Bithuri si alak Shyam ghansi laagat  
Jhapak jhapak ugharat mere  
jaan taareh  
Arun barun nain tere fame faai dore,  
Taapar ambuja vaar vaar daare  
Kahe Miyan Tansen Suno Shahe  
Akbar

Upma kahan ion deen, bin anjan  
kajraare !!

But the Thumri singer will have his own lighter and direct way, as Sanad Piya would say in Bhairavi —

Ab toori baanki lyaniyan re ab tori  
baaki chitvan  
Yero man bas kino pyaari pyaari  
batiyan Karke !

Sanad kahe mora jiya nahin maane  
Daadino moye Jaadusaa —  
kachu karke.

Tansen will have the patience to search for similes in heaven and earth, but the poor Sanad is under a magic charm and spell that has been cast on him, not by Nain, or Lochan, but by Loyaniya and Chitvan. Note the full elasticity and resilience given to the synonyms, used partly as verbs as dynamic forces in action rather than something static. Another Thumri composer would say — *kaske mare tore nain* and would expatiate on the emotions in all its shades and colours by means of the *Bol*.

There are a host of Thumri composers belonging to the Lucknow school whose very pseudonyms savour of the Thumri element — Kadar Piya, Sanad Piya — already reviewed, and Najari Piya, Sughar Piya and Lalen Piya.

The last of these, Lalanji of Farrukhabad, needs a special mention. He has composed Thumris in the medium and fast tempo, which have a sparkling rhythm and yet maintain the definite Thumri form. His Thumri in Khamaj, Trital, has become very popular and is highly respected by Ustads. It is *Sohni Sohni Mohni Mohni Murat Vaari re Savariya pe !!*

The Thumris of Lalanji are a class in themselves. The most authentic version of a large number of Kadar Piya's

Thumris is contained in the Kramik series of Bhatkhande, because these were learnt by Padmabhushan. Shri S. N. Ratanjankar directly from Kadar Piya's son, the late Nawab Chaulakhi Mirza Murad Dahar.

Many of the Thumris of Najari Piya were learnt directly from him by Raja Bhaiya Poochwale and are published in his *Thumri Tarangini* together with those of some of the other composers named before. A few examples of a representative character may be cited.

There are some examples with an impact of Urdu, but these are rare. For instance, here is a Thumri in Tilang —  
*Saavariya tore vaari me naa jaiho re !  
Is baari main kya kya boya ishk  
mohabbat yaari,  
Savariya tore vaari .....*

There are some Thumris in the Punjabi language also, which has the monopoly of the Tappa and also is used in Khyal and Dhrupad. For instance, the following Thumri in mixed Bhipalasi or Dhani —

Saande nal baamaniyan dil bhariya  
Sajan man Ramaiya !  
Latak latak latiaain Nandalaadi hasn  
hasn mura batlaa vadiyaan !

The Punjabi, however, does not suit the genius of the *Bol* and could not thrive in the realm of the Thumri as it did in that of the Khyal.

## BANARAS SCHOOL

There are sometimes words from Surdas or Ghananand and other poets also travelling into the Thumri region. For instance, *Lag rahyo man Radha varson* in Khamaj is a song by the famous

Riti-kala poet of Brajabhasha Ghananand and another in Kafi, Deepchandi is the Bhajan type of Thumari or the Thumari type of Bhajan of which the words are attributed to Surdas. While the Banaras school has followed the Thumari sponsored by the Lucknow School, it has some leanings towards the local dialect and some gleanings from the Chaiti and Kajri — the regional folk tunes. The following is a glimpse of the wording :

Naatak laaye yavvanavare mora  
Are aap to jaay videsvaa re shaye  
Jab se gaye mori sudh huna leeni,  
tum to chaye videsvaare !

The Thumris of the Banaras School are comparatively free from the impact of Urdu of patches of Khari Boli. Sometimes a Thumri singer can start a Thumri and as a relief against the rhythmic procedure can give a series of devotional or love poems in the form of so many Antaras, during which the drumming is suspended.

As the Sama Vedic music, the Khyal and other forms have their Stobhaksharas — i.e., syllables of exclamation or ejaculation, so Thumri also has its own. These are *haa han, kaay, haay ho Rama are haare* and so on. These ejaculations have a definite role to play — they heighten the effect of the sentiment portrayed and help the repetitions and variations of the tune and sometimes they savour of the lascivious or the voluptuous.

## SIMPLE YET DEEPER SENTIMENT

It will be a great injustice if emphasis is not given to a class of Thumris which have a depth and a pathos, all inimitable in any other form. The



famous Thumri sung by the late Abdul Karim Khan, namely *Piya bin naahi aavat chain* or by Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali — *Kate naa pirha ki raat, Sakhi ke bin joovana jaat, Sudhi, bisrayi mori*, may be cited as examples. The phraseology here is simple and direct and though there is hardly anything to recommend it as pure poetry, it certainly inspires the singer to the depths and flights of melodic imagination in tune with the pathos.

I had referred to the School of Bindadin. Bindadin has to his credit a large number of Thumris, some of which are published in Bhatkhande's Kramik series. Here is an example of a Thumri in Shahana, Trital —

*Jaane de me ka suno sajanvan  
Kahe karat tum nit ut hamsan raar  
Naahi Naahi maanoongi tori me ab !  
Cher karat nahi mane bharjori kar  
gahleeni,  
Binda kahun kya me, nit ut  
humsan raar  
Naahi Naahi maanoongi tori me ab !!*

Most of his Thumris are full of the delicate and sparkling feminine expressions which harmonise with the Natwari form of dance and give a solid grounding to the dancer in some of its traits.

As already pointed out, Thumris have an impact of the folk element, sometimes discernible in the literary garb as well. Here is a Thumri in Desa which has the impact of the 'jhoola' or the swing sport in it :

*Aavo ri saheli jhonka deeje  
Barsat phurya ae ji ab raiya chalo  
joola joee  
Hum sab kelen ?  
Sajyan ne jhoola bagiyan daala  
Piya wo bulave saavan gaaye ?*

There is another Thumri in Pilu, which has the impact of 'Sawan' — the folk festival of monsoon. But here the theme is developed to unfathomable depths of pathos in the most refined manner —

*Laag rahi yeri ye saawan ki jhari,  
Yeri me bheejat un bin kabki sadi*

*Sapne me aayo piya mero man ke gayo  
de gayo ri asuvan ki jhari  
Yeri ye me bheejat un bin kabki sadi !!*

The words here in conjunction with the tune have acquired suggestiveness that cannot be translated.

I may be questioned why I have omitted the Punjab School. I have done so deliberately. The more apt word for it is the Punjab Anga and it is purely a musical technique of gliding swiftly over semitones or quarter-tones which a singer of any school may do if prompted by his fancy. It has, therefore, hardly anything to do with the literary element and is therefore out of the scope of this paper.

As in the political world, so in the world of arts there are revolutions and counter-revolutions. Perhaps because there is already a surfeit of the erotic, of the voluptuous or of a devotion to a personal god, say Krishna, there is, in Varanasi a reaction to choose the Nirguna or the knowledge of the Self as a theme for the Thumri. This has been pointed out by Prof. D. Ojha in his article referred to earlier. But as I have no samples of this type at my disposal, I can do no more than make a passing reference. I do not, however, agree with Mr. Ojha when he visualises a bright future for the Thumri of this type. I should rather call it a forcible and coercive conversion of a youthful, romanti-

cally and delicately framed damsel to ways of severe austerity by some ruthless ascetics.

For Thumri is in its true colour when the artiste has completely given himself up, to fantasy of the sport and dalliance of love or to a dejection and pathos ensuing therefrom.

As Schiller says, "man is completely human when he is playing". C. G. Jung in his *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* joins him and asserts — "Truth to tell, I have very high opinion of fantasy. All the works of man have their origin in creative fantasy." What right have we then to depreciate imagination ?

It is bound up with the tap-root of human and animal instinct. The creativity of the imagination frees man from his bondage to the "nothing but and liberates in him the spirit of the play. Something invaluable is won — a growth of independence a step towards psychological maturity".

There are various demands that are made on art and letters and as pointed out by Walter Pater, all disinterested lovers of these look to these as "a sort of eloisteral refuge from a certain vulgarity in the actual world". The Thumri indeed, comes as a rescue. The entire endeavour of the Thumri artiste is directed towards making his art "pleasing — fine — as opposed to merely serviceable. No Thumri is serviceable in the sense that a Dhrupad or a Lakshana Geet may be towards an authentic Raga picture.

#### PERPETUAL CREATION

The literary critics or the grammarian may come forward with attacks on the language or the patchy and haphazard literary garb of the Thumri. But he has to be warned that he is dealing with the language of music where poetry is play-

ing a subordinate role. In the choice of words and phrases, the Thumri artiste is often "back to the earliest divination of the finished work to be lying somewhere, according to Michael Angelo's fancy, in the rough-hewn block". Benedetto Croce in his thesis of "Aesthetics as Science of Expression and General Linguistic" has rightly emphasised the impossibility of a normative grammar — impossibility of creating language artificially and has pointed out that the "nature of expression supplies the method of discovering the scientific error which lies in the conception of a (normative) grammar, establishing the rules of correct speech." Good sense, he says, has always rebelled against this error. "Language," says Benedetto Croce, "is perpetual creation. The ever new impressions give use to continuous changes of sound and meaning, that is, to ever-new expressions. To seek the model language therefore is to seek the immobility of motion."

The Thumri artiste was much ahead of the Riti-kala poet of Hindi indulging in formal "Nayika Bhedha" or "Nakha shikha Varnana". The Thumri artiste was throbbing with life, had a direct approach to language and emotion. He had his own "style". And this style is a characteristic "mould", "a certain absolute and unique manner of expressing a thing, in all its intensity and colour", and into this the artiste pours the whole content of his being.

In spite of some of its objectionable associations, the Thumri is no doubt a flower of transcendent beauty, and beauty in the words of Kalidasa, can never be defiled and there is nothing which does not add to its charm —

*Kimiv hi madhuraanaam, mandan  
naakrutinaam*

(Concluded)



## CULTURAL SCENE IN BOMBAY

The Monsoon Programmes of Shanmukhananda have actually been "Youth Programmes", organised with a view to providing continued fillip to the young 'stars' of tomorrow. During the three months, of June, August and September, the Sabha has planned to hold a two-day programme, each day with two sessions featuring up-and-coming artistes from Bombay and the South. The accompanists too are from young accomplished talents.

The June sessions started on a promising note. It was heartening to see youth emerging with forceful vitality and dynamic articulation. There has been of late quite a spurt in this direction, the young talents forging ahead and getting into sharp focus, showing a passion for performing arts, with certain individuality, in spite of its simultaneous participation in academic pursuit where competition runs high. As a general rule the talented seem to shine in both. They strive with dedication and diligence, train under stalwarts and try to keep the tradition going. The four artistes of the month of June, Kasturi Rangan (Bombay), Sanjay Subramanyam (Madras), P. S. Krishnamoorthy (Bombay) and Ashok Ramani (Madras) with accompanying artists Padma Narayan and Padmanabhan of Bombay gave more than their 'mite' not only upholding the elders' objectives and efforts but also holding a promise for the future of Karnatak music.

One thing that was common among the artistes was that they are talents 'natural', nurtured in the soil of musical

homes. They are honed to traditional form each interestingly belonging to a Bani that has a popularity all its own. They also seem to strike a form of their own while maintaining the Bani in which they are primarily trained.

Kasturi Rangan, a product of Shanmukhananda, currently undergoing intensive training under Madurai Seshagopalan at Madras for instance, showed much mellowing in his manner of singing and method of approach. From fireworks of concert artistry to sober musical articulation, from flamboyant intricacies to a sarvalagu ease, he has come a long way solidifying his presentational norms. A stability, a studied involvement seem to be his present efforts. Which are sure to take him far, provided he lays accent on a cohesive build up instead of banking on staccato phrases.

Kasturi's Dharmavathi, Kanada and Shanmukhapriya were good display of artistic brushstrokes. In consonance with the song structure *Sukhi Evvaro* Kanada alapana moved on placid stream while Shanmukhapriya, the main Raga of the evening, was splashed with off-beat designs adding colour and gaiety. The Khanda Tripata Pallavi was in form. The Ragamalika swaras reflected modal beauty. A little more care he could exercise in keeping the Tala intact.

Sanjay Subramanyan, a scion and disciple of Rukmini Rajagopalan stole the show by amazing the audience with his voice power and productivity. He seems to be obviously trained in GNB Bani for he effectively sang in that Bani

what with his 'Ravai Sareeram' reeling off darts and brikkas. And there was the sure touch of DKJ too in his 'uchcharan' of Sahitya and rendition of certain Sangathees. The pyrotechnics never took him off the traditional bounds, or bhava evocation. His Begada (*Vallabha*) had a romantic charm, his *Bhuvinidasudane* exuded Sriranjana's elusive grace, he was all poignant in Mukhari (*Kaarubaaru*), the pace correspondingly slowing down. Kalyani was full of sparkling brilliance and the essence of the kriti *Unnaiyallal Vere gathi illai Amma* bound him down to a sedate Niraval and Swaras. Sanjay's Kambhoji was an essay of aesthetics, emotion and modulation. Much restraint was exercised here. And the Raga-Tanam-Pallavi in *Adi Tisra Nadai* emerged as the crowning piece.

While admiring all that he is 'bountifully' endowed with, he may be advised against overmodulation and high-pressure brikkas which, in the long run, might debilitate his vocal power and flexibility. A little restraint now, will certainly help him endure long.

Flautist P. S. Krishnamoorthy is already a name to reckon with in this metropolis. He is a fine artiste total — a painter, a Vocalist, a Mridangist, a Harmonium player and has contributed to dance recitals from the 'Wings'. And his is a music home reverberating in 'bhajana tradition', classical sampradaya and music of the dance. Of late he has taken to Flute in a big way, with a quietude of an experienced performer. For a self-learner he has mastered in instrument to play with finesse and flourish. No frills for him nor fast pace. Playing soft and sedate he enchants through every phase of his music — composed or improvised.

Purvi Kalyani, Kambhoji and Bhairavi in 'gayaki' form glowed in their evocative grandeur. The alapanas had quintessence, beauty and poise, and popular songs like "Ananda Natamaduvār" and "Evarimata" whetted one's appetite for more. The latter had intricacies spun in the swaras. The truncated RTJ sans Swaras owing to time constraint had its own charm to relay.

Ashok Ramani, the grandson of Panamasam Sivan and disciple of D. K. Jayaraman was sincere to his 'home' and 'Gurukula'. His voice is his asset and the 'paatanthara' suddha, Sruti Suddha and 'Vaak' Suddha — all added a dimension making the session a vibrant concert effort.

His concert was marked for refreshing repertoire although he repeated the Ragas rendered in the previous session. (The youngsters may do well to attend others' performances). *Parameshwara Jagadeeswara* (Natai), *Tyagarajaya Namasthe* (Begada), *Ksheerasagara Saayi* (Purvi Kalyani), *Tanayuni* (Bhairavi) and an evocative Ragamalika Virutham and Tukkadas made it a balanced fare, the absence of Pallavi not making any difference.

The accompanists for both the days Padma Narayan (Violin) and Padmanabhan (Mridangam) kept up the concert spirit. A bit too restrained Padma chose to remain subdued. Her fingering and bowing technique showed fine training. With more experience she should rise up to greater challenges.

Experience has given Padmanabhan a greater felicity and he rose up to the occasion, adjusting to each artiste's style and played a Thani each time weaving a fresh and giving the Tala,



even if it be the same Adi, a fresh facade.

Another Bombay boy, Sriram Parasuram, who has gone westward to perfect his technique, bowing and fingering, came back on a short vacation to show his prowess in Violin play, and did it with great success.

An artiste who surprised the audience even as a child playing with confidence and competence, Sriram recently in his solo at NCPA displayed what it is to acquire perfection in technique. Applying that perfection to Karatak idiom he gave a fare that was full of enchanting Nada and involvign nuances. There was no superfluity, no overemphasis; no pyrotechnics, not even a semblance of showmanship. As one sure of his ideas and sure of his 'hand', he played soothing, silken melody adding sweetness through his 'gayaki' style.

Garudadhvani Varnam, *Siddhivinyakam* (Chamaram), Sri Raga Pancharatnam, *Paridanamichite* (Bilahari), *Raka Sasivadana* (Takka), *Sri Krishnam* (Todi), the Jonpuri Dasarnama, Brindavana Saranga Tillana — all made an impact on the audience. In the placidity of his tone, Todi shone with graces and motifs, and Bilahari exuded a caressing charm.

Here is an Engnieer-cum-IIM alumnus taken to music as a full-time profession. He is shortly leaving for the States to do his doctrate in Ethnomusicology at the Wesleyan University.

Pairing with him on Mridangam was Balaji, from the commerce stream, but delving into laya intricacies with clarity and precision. Both had a healthy dialogue in swara-session and it once again held promise for the future from the younger generation.

KINNARI

---

## OBITUARY

We record with deep regret the passing away recently of Shri A. S. Mani, a Member of the Managing Committee for several years, who also served as Hon. Treasurer and Vice-President of the Sabha; and Shri R. Ramakrishnan, a Secretary of the Board of Trustees for some time, and an Internal Auditor of the Sabha.

We also record with deep regret the demise of Kalaimamani Y. G. Parthasarathy, a veteran stage actor of many years' standing.

---

## A TRIBUTE

### THE TOWERING EMBAR

Yet another bastion of music has fallen. The 82-year-old, Sathabhisheki, Harikatha Chakravarthy. Embar Vijayaraghavachariar is no more. Ailing for some time, the doyen breathed his last early last month.

"Would it not have been really fitting if I were selected when I could stand on my own in Sruti and performance?" Only the 'giant' of an Embar, could issue such a dart. At 73, he required a supporting voice, almost a 'performing partner in music', and music is all that Harikatha comprises; and that was how he reacted to when informed of being selected "unanimously" as the Sangitha Kalanidhi of the year in 1982.

He had the dig at the selectors in his presidential address of that year's conference of the Music Academy, Madras, which after a long gap of 4½ decades had come forward to honour the Harikatha. The first exponent to be so honoured in 1937 was Mangudi Chidambara Bhagavathar, and Embar expressed his concern that during all these years no one was considered for the award although there were many prominent Harikatha exponents in performing peak, male and female!

Better late than never. He was happy that at least he was lucky, at that advanced age. Very firm in his conviction, he was never prepared to accept that Harikatha exponent was any different from, much less inferior to, a performing musician. Harikatha, he emphasised, is "a musical form in which a story was narrated with the accompaniment of suitable compositions, composed by renowned saint composers." And it needs a musical perception of interpreting an episode, a melodious voice, a powerful idiom, knowledge of languages and literature. Added to all these, he has to be a good musician with training in classical, light and folk music to an extent to make his art educative as well as entertaining.

A musical composition gets its most authentic version in Harikatha. The context, the circumstances, the 'event' that evoke a song to be composed automatically surface in the Harikatha and in this it scores over a music concert which brings into focus a musician's personal idiom, his aesthetic perception and performing skills.

Embar, true to his conviction, towered in his chosen milieu. His stentorian voice rang through many a hall. Towering in physique, and towering over his peers he made his art a complete education that made people "cultured even without being literate." Heritage (son and disciple of Chidambaram Srirangachariar, he was a descendant of Embar Govinda-



# Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha (Regd.)

292, Jayshankar Yagnik Marg, Sion East, Bombay-400 022.

## MONSOON PROGRAMMES

With a view to providing continued fillip to up-and-coming Artistes from South and Bombay, four compartmentalised Programmes for two days each in June, August and September 1991 are being presented to Members. Thus we could achieve wider-participation of such artistes for the discerning Members of the Sabha. June Programmes having already taken place, the August — September Session are detailed below :

### AUGUST ATTRACTIONS

- |         |    |                                    |                 |
|---------|----|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 10.8.91 | 1. | Smt. Jayasree Arvind (Bombay)      | — Veena Recital |
|         | 2. | Shri S. P. Ramh (Madras)           | — Vocal Concert |
| 11.8.91 | 1. | Smt. Subhalakshmi Sampath (Bombay) | — Vocal Concert |
|         | 2. | Smt. Jayashree (Madras)            | — Vocal Concert |

### Accompanying Artistes

- |                                   |             |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Ms. Soumya Subbaraman (Bombay)    | — Violin    |
| Shri S. Sankaranarayanan (Bombay) | — Mridangam |

### SEPTEMBER SOIREE

- |         |    |                                                                                                                                                |                 |
|---------|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 14.9.91 | 1. | Smt. Geetha Murali & Party (Bombay)                                                                                                            | — Vocal Concert |
|         | 2. | Shri P. Unnikrishnan (Madras)                                                                                                                  | — Vocal Concert |
| 15.9.91 | 1. | TALA VADHYA ENSEMBLE by the Students of the Sabha's Sangeetha Vidyalaya & Disciples of Shri T. S. Nandakumar, Faculty Member of the Vidyalaya. |                 |
|         | 2. | Smt. Geetha Rajasekhar (Madras)                                                                                                                | — Vocal Concert |

### Accompanying Artistes

- |                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Shri Calcutta Balaji            | — Violin    |
| Shri Rajesh Srinivasan (Bombay) | — Mridangam |

Venue : S.I.E.S. SCHOOL HALL, K. A. SUBRAMANIAM ROAD, (BRAHMANWADA), MATUNGA, BOMBAY-400 019.

## SHANMUKHANANDA MEDICAL CENTRE

*Sabha's Medical Services for Members*

The Medical Services in our Centre are continuing and will be maintained even during the repair and restoration of the main Hall.

Medical services currently available include,

— Free consultation for our members with specialists of various disciplines such as Medicine, Surgery, Skin, Gyneacology, Ophthalmology & Dental Care.

— Other services include Pathological Laboratory Services, X-Rays, ECG, Cardiogram at concessional rates.

— Complete health check-up for only Rs. 200/-

New services being added will include Homeopathy and Ultrasound Examination.

We request Sabha Members to avail of the above services and also free Ambulance service.

perumal, a direct disciple of the great Ramanuja) and hard work shot him to fame. A linguist, he was a master of Vedanta, Sahitya, Vyakarna, and with lucidity of expression, in 'Katha' and 'Gana' he conquered his audience. He had an arresting way of opening the 'Katha'. "Which is greater — Rama or Rama Nama?" — naturally would kindle everybody's curiosity. And with a deceptive smile he would proceed to sing *Smaranesukham Sri Rama Nama*, the Tyagaraja Kritis in Janaranjani giving a cue to his answer — the greatness of Rama Nama. The entire "Tyagaraja Charitram" once revolved round this theme, where anecdotes, episodes, upakathas flowed uninterrupted through melody and exposition. Vaggeyakara charitras were his speciality, so also of the Shaivite and Vaishnavite Saints.

Awards and titles bore testimony to his eminence and popularity : "Tyagamani", "Kalaimamani", "Keertanakulasekhara", "Sangita Sahitya Vallabha", "Gita Katha Praveena", "Katharasavaadaka", "Sangita Kalanidhi" etc. He was made a Fellow of Central Sangeet Natak Akademi.

Yet, the media did not make a documentary of his art. He was not included in the Great Masters Series of the Doordarshan. There was a plea in Bombay that a few Harikathas by him be documented for 'future reference' as there was marked decline in the art and very few were coming forward to take up this challenging profession. But nothing seems to have materialised. Embar himself had pleaded for a course of Harikatha to be included in music schools. Has it been heeded?

There could be no better way of paying tribute to the late titan than recalling what he had to say about the art of Harikatha, its evolution, its place in the fine arts and plea for its propagation. SHANMUKHA publishes in the following pages the article "Harikatha", he wrote in Tamil, for the "Commemoration Volume" that could not come out owing to circumstances beyond our control.

Sulochana Rajendran





## ஹரிகதை

By 'ஸங்கீத கலாநிதி' எம்பார் எஸ். விஜயராகவாச்சாரியார்

சங்கீதக் கலை நமது பாரத நாட்டின் தொன்மையானதும் தெய்வீக மணம் கமழும் கலையாகும். பச்சைக் குழந்தை முதல் வயது முதிர்ந்த பெரியோர் வரை அனைத்து மக்களையும் ஈர்க்கும் சக்தி படைத்தது. இவ்வரிய கலைக்கு மயங்காதவர் யாரேனும் உளரோ! 'பகர் வேத்தி சிகர் வேத்தி கான ரஸம் பணி' என்று பழமொழி கூறுகிறது. மதம் பிடித்த வேழத்தையும் அடக்கும் சக்தி இன்னசைகளு உண்டு. உதயணன் வீணை இசைத்து மதம் பிடித்த யானையை அடக்கி ஞான வகறு கூறுகிறது ப்ருகத் கதை.

புராணத் தலைவர்களுள் தலை சிறந்து விளங்கிய இராவணன், பாணசுரன் போன்ற தவர்கள் இன்னிசையால் இறைவனை திருவருளைப் பெற்றவர்கள். "கங்காளாய நின்று எமமிறை நல் வீணை வாசிக்குமே" என்று அப்பா ஸ்வாமிகள் தம்முடைய தேவாரத் திருப்பதிகத்தில் கூறுகிறார். "ப்ருங்கி, தடேச, ஸமீஜ, கடஜ, மதங்க, நாரதா துலு உபாஸிஞ்சே, ஸங்கீத ஞானமு" என ஸ்ரீ தயாகப்ரமம் அருளிச் செய்கிறார்கள். இவர்கள் அளவரதம் நல்லிசையின் நாதத்திலேயே நினைத்திருக்கிறார்கள்.

### ஸங்கீதத்தின் ஒரு கிளை

நாதத்திலிருந்து கருதிகள். கருதிகளிலிருந்து ஸ்வரங்கள், ஸ்வரங்களிலிருந்து பல்லாயிரக்கணக்கான ராகங்கள் என்கிற கிரமத்தில் சாங்கோபசாகமாய் விருத்தியாகிப் பிரகாசித்து வருகிறது சங்கீதம்,

சங்கீதத்தில் வாய்ப்பாட்டு. குழலிசை, வீணை, நாதஸ்வரம், ஹரிகதை, நாட்டியம் போன்ற பல பிரிவுகள் உள்ளன. இவை ஒவ்வொன்றும் பற்பல சிறப்புகளைத் தன்னிடத்தே கொண்டுள்ளது. ஹரிகதையும் சங்கீதத்தின் ஒரு பிரிவுதான். ஹரிகதைக்கு சங்கீதம் மிகவும் இன்றியமையாததாகும்.

இயல், இசை. நாடகம் ஆகிய இம் மூன்றும் சேர்ந்த கலையே ஹரிகதைக் கலையாகும். நம் நாட்டில் ஹரிகதைக் கலையானது தொன்று தொட்டு இருந்து கொண்டே வருகிறது. இன்னிசையுடன் இதிஹாஸ புராண வரலாறுகளை எடுத்துச் சொல்லும் அரிய கலையான ஹரிகதை நம் நாட்டின் சிறந்த பொக்கிஷமாகும்.

இதிஹாஸ புராண நாட்களிலேயே பல பெரியோர்கள் ஓரிடத்தில் ஒன்றுகூடி, பலர் நடுவிலே புராண வரலாறுகளை தக்க சான்றுகளுடன், இன்னிசையையும் கூட்டிச் சொல்லும் பழக்கம் இருந்து வந்திருக்கிறது. ஆயிரக்கணக்கான மக்கள் கேட்டு இன்புற்றுப் பேராணந்தம் அடைந்தனர் என்பதற்கு ஏராளமான சான்றுகள் கிடைக்கின்றன. இதனை ஸ்ரீமத் பாகவதம் கூறும்போது :

"ப்ரஹ்லாத ஸ்தாலதாரி, தாள கதீத யாச உத்தவக் காம்ஸதாரி, வீணாதாரி ஸூரரிஷி, ஸ்வரகுசலதயா, ராக கர்த்தா அர்ஜுரேபூத், இந்த்ரோ வாதீம் ம்ருதங்கம் ஜய ஜய நிகரே, கீர்த்தனதே குமாரா; யஸ்ராக்ரே

பாவ வக்தா ஸரஸ ரசன்யா வ்யாஸ புத்ரோ வபுவ" என்று கூறுகிறது.

வேதவ்யாச குமாரர் ஸ்ரீ சுகாச்சாரியார் ஸ்ரீமத் பாகவதத்தை அழகாக எடுத்து பாடி விளக்கம் சொல்லவும் அதற்கு ப்ரஹ்லாதன் தாளம் போட்டுக்கொண்டு இருக்கிறார். உத்தவர் பெரிய ஜாலர் ஒன்றைக் கையில் கொண்டு லய விந்யாஸம் பண்ணுகிறார். இதற்கு மேலும் ஸ்ரீ நாரதர் தன் கையில் உள்ள வீணையை இசைத்து மெருகூட்டுகிறார். சங்கீத சாஸ்திரத்தில் வல்லவனான அர்ஜுனன் பல பல விதமான இராகங்களைக் கையாண்டு உடன்பாடுகிறார், [Vocal Support]. தேவ சேனாதிபதி இந்திரன் இதற்கு மிக அழகாக மிருதங்கம் வாசிக்கிறார். ஜெய விஜயாதிகள், பாகவதர்கள் எல்லோரும் இதனைக் கேட்டு ஆனந்தப் பரவசமடைகிறார்கள்.

### மராத்திய மண்ணில் உதித்த கலை

இவற்றைப் பார்க்கும் போது ஹரிகதா காலக்ஷேபம் செய்கின்ற ஒரு கலைஞருக்கு, உடன்பாடுபவர்கள், மிருதங்கம் வாசிப்பவர், வீணை வாசிப்பவர் போன்ற பலர் இருந்திருக்கின்றனர் எனத் தெரிய வருகிறது. இவ்வரிய ஹரிகதைக் கலையானது வட நாட்டில் மஹாராஷ்டிர தேசத்தில் மிகவும் பிரபலமாக விளங்கியது. வட நாட்டில் இதற்கு "ஹரிகீர்த்தன்" என்றும், இதனை நிகழ்த்தும் கலைஞரை "கீர்த்தன்கார்" என்றும் அழைத்து வந்தனர்.

இவர்கள் அதிகமாக ஸ்ரீ ராமாயணம், ஸ்ரீமத் பாகவதம், பக்த விஜய கதைகள், சிவ புராணங்களில் சிலவற்றையும் கையாண்டு வந்தனர். மேரோ பந்தர்,

அம்ருதராய கவி, சிந்தாமணி கவி, அநாம கவி, நாம தேவர், வாமன பண்டிதர் போன்ற பற்பல கவிஞர்கள், பல்வேறு விருத்தங்களில் இதற்காக கதா நிருபணங்களை இயற்றி வைத்துள்ளார்கள். ஹரிகதை கலைக்கு ஏராளமான நூல்கள் மிகவும் உதவியாக இருந்தன. இவற்றில் குறிப்பிடத்தகுந்த நூல்களாவன: "கீர்த்தனை மாலா", "கீர்த்தன ரூபதர்ஸிகா", "கீர்த்தனை குமுதினி", "கீர்த்தன தரங்கிணி", "கீர்த்தன மாஸிக", "கீர்த்தன முக்தாஹா", "ரத்ருமாலா", "கீர்த்தன ஸுமனஹார்", "கீர்த்தன ஸுதா", "ஆக்ஞான ஸமுச்சய", "ஆக்ஞான ரத்னமாலா" போன்றவைகள்,

ஹரிகதை முதலில் மராட்டிய மொழியில் தான் இருந்தது. இம் மொழியில் அமைந்த ஹரிகதா நிருபணங்களில் ஸாகி, திண்டி, பஞ்ச சாமரம், ஒளி, அஞ்சன கீதம், கட்டா, அபங்கங்கள், மத்த கோகிலம் போன்ற சிறிய உருப்படிகள் எல்லாம் தாளத்திற்குக் கட்டுப்பட்ட அழகான விருத்தங்கள். இம்முறையை ஒட்டித்தான இக் கலையானது ஆந்திரா, கர்நாடகம், தமிழ் நாடு கேரளா போன்ற இடங்களில் வெவ்வேறு பெயரில் பிரபலமாகத் திகழத் தொடங்கியது.

### தமிழ் நாட்டில் வளர்ச்சி

தமிழகத்தில் இக் கலையை ஹரிகதை என்றும் கதாகாலக்ஷேபம் என்றும் பெயரிட்டு அழைத்து வந்தனர். தற்காலத்தில் இதனை இசைச் சொற்பொழிவு என்றும் அழைக்கின்றனர். தஞ்சையை ஆண்ட மராத்திய மன்னர்கள் இக் கலைக்கு ஆதரவளித்தனர்.

ஹரிகதை கலைஞருக்கு சிறந்த சங்கீத ஞானம், சாஸ்திர ஞானம், லய ஞானம், மக்களை ஈர்க்கும் சக்தி, பன்மொழிகளில்



புலமை அனைத்தும் நிறைந்து இருத்தல் அவ சியமாகும். இவை பூர்ணமாக ஹரிகதையில் இருக்கவேண்டும். ஹரிகதை கலைஞராக வர வேண்டும் என்றால் தக்க குருநாதனை அடைந்து, மேலே சொல்லப்பட்ட அனைத் தையும் செம்மையுடன் கற்றுத் தேர்ந்து செயல்பட வேண்டும். அவர்கள் நிகழ்ச்சி யைக் கேட்டு ரவித்து அந்த பாணியை அப்படியே பின்பிற்ற வேண்டும்.

மராட்டிய மொழியில் இருந்து வந்த இக் கலையை முதன் முதலில் வெகு அழகாக தமிழில் செய்யத் தொடங்கியவர் தஞ்சாவூர் கிருஷ்ண பாகவதர் என்பவர். மராட்டிய மொழியில் அமைந்த ஹரிகதா நிருபணங் களோடு நம் தமிழ் நாட்டின் முன்னோர் களான அருணாசலக் கவிராயர், அனந்த பாரதிகள், கவிஞ்சர பாரதிகள், மழவை சிதம்பர பாரதிகள், ராமஸ்வாமி சிவன், தீலகண்ட சிவன் போன்ற பெரியோர்கள் இயற்றிய கீர்த்தனைகளையும், மேலும் புரந்தர தாஸர், ராமதாஸர், ஸ்ரீ தியாகபுரம்மம், ஸ்ரீ முத்துஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷதர், சியாமா சாஸ்திரி கள் போன்ற மகான்களின் கீர்த்தனைகளையும் கையாண்டு ஹரிகதையை மிகவும் பிரபல மடையச் செய்த பெருமை நம் தமிழ் நாட்டையே சாரும்.

அந் நாளில் வாழ்ந்த கோபாலகிருஷ்ண பாரதிகள் நந்தனார் சரித்திரம், திருநீலகண்ட நாயனார் சரித்திரம், இயற்பகை நாயனார் சரித்திரம் போன்ற பெரியபுராண வரலாறு களை எல்லாம் கதாகாலகோபம் செய்யவும் நிருபணங்களாகவே இயற்றி வைத்தார்கள். நந்தனார் சரித்திரத்தை முதன்முதலில் ஹரி கதையாகச் செய்தவர் தஞ்சாவூர் கிருஷ்ண பாகவதர்தான். அவருடைய நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் கருதி, லயம், நாடம் இவை அனைத்தும் நிரம்பிக் கிடக்கும் என்பார்கள். இவரு

டைய நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் அந்நாளில் மிகவும் பிர பலமாக விளங்கிய மிருதங்க வித்வான் நாராயணசாமி அப்பா போன்றவர்கள் மிரு தங்கம் இசைத்தனராம். ஹரிகதை நிகழ்ச்சி களில் ஏழடி, உசி போன்ற தாள நடைகள் வெகுவாக கையாளப்பட்டது.

**“அனைத்துமாகிய” ஹரிகதை**

ஹரிகதை நிகழ்ச்சிகளில்தான் உயர்ந்த சங்கீதம், நல்ல சாஸ்திர ஞானம், பண் மொழிப் புலமை, நவரஸம் எல்லாவற்றிற் கும் இடம் உண்டு. இவை அனைத்தும் பூர் ணமாய் அமைந்தால்தான் நல்ல ஹரிகதை நிகழ்ச்சி நிறைவு பெறும். அப்பொழுதுதான் இந்த கலையை ஜனரஞ்சகமாகச் செய்ய முடியும்.

ஹரிகதைகளில் ஏழடி, உசி போன்ற தாள நடைகள் வெகு சகஜமாகக் கையாளப் பட்டதால்தான், அந்நாளில் புகழ் படைத்த மிருதங்க மகா வித்வான்களான நாராயண சாமி அப்பா, தாஸ் ஸ்வாமிகள், தஞ்சாவூர் பக்கிரிப் பிள்ளை, தஞ்சாவூர் வைத்யநாத அய்யர், உமையாள்புரம் கோதண்டராம அய்யர், தக்ஷிணாமூர்த்தி பிள்ளை, அழகு நம்பிப் பிள்ளை, குற்றலம் குப்புசாமி பிள்ளை, ரங்கு அய்யங்கார், பாலக்காடு மணி அய்யர் போன்றவர்கள் ஹரிகதை அரங்குகளில் மிருதங்கம் வாசித்தனர், கச்சேரிகளுக்கு மாத்திரம் மிருதங்கம் வாசிக்கும் மிருதங்க கலைஞர்களால் ஹரிகதைக்கு வாசிக்க முடியாது. ஆனால் ஹரிகதைக்கு வாசித்தவர்களால் கச்சேரிக்கு வாசிக்க முடியும். என்னு டைய ஹரிகதை நிகழ்ச்சிகளுக்கு ஸ்ரீ T. K. மூர்த்தி, ஸ்ரீ உமையாள்புரம் சிவராமன், ஸ்ரீ குற்றலம் விஸ்வநாத அய்யர் போன்ற மகா மேதைகள் மிருதங்கம் வாசித்து இருக் கிறார்கள்.

தஞ்சாவூர் கிருஷ்ண பாகவதர் முறையை பின்பற்றி ஹரிகதை அந்நாளில் மிகவும் பிர

பலமாக இருந்தது. அவர்களில் ஸ்ரீ மகா வைத்யனாத அய்யர், தஞ்சாவூர் பஞ்சாபகேச பாகவதர், பண்டித லக்ஷ்மணசார் ஸ்வாமி, ஹரிகேசநல்லூர் முத்தையா பாகவதர், திருப்பழனம் பஞ்சாபகேச சாஸ்திரிகள் என் னுடைய மதிப்பிற்குரிய தந்தையார் சிதம்பரம் ஸ்ரீரங்காச்சரியார், மாங்குடி சிதம்பர பாகவதர், பழநி சுப்ரமணிய பாகவதர், குலமங்கலம் வைத்யனாத பாகவதர், மாயூரம் ராமஸ்வாமி பாகவதர், திருவிடைமருதூர் கிருஷ்ண பாகவதர், குலமங்கலம் சௌந்திர ராஜ பாகவதர், தஞ்சாவூர் நாகராஜ பாக வதர், ஆவுடையார் கோயில் ஹரிஹர பாக வதர், ஸ்ரீரங்கம் சடகோபாச்சாரியார், திரு வையாறு அண்ணாசாமி பாகவதர், கல்பாத்தி சிவராமகிருஷ்ண பாகவதர், கும்பகோணம் வாதிராஜ பாகவதர், ராஜாராம் பாகவதர் போன்றவர் மிகவும் குறிப்பிடத் தகுந்தவர் கள்.

**ஹரிகதையில் மஹாத்மா காந்தி**

அந்நாளில் ஹரிகதைக்கு மிகவும் பிரக்யாதி இருந்ததால் சிறந்த சங்கீத வித் வான்களாகத் திகழ்ந்தவர்கள் கூட ஹரிக தைக்கு வந்து பெயரும் புகழும் பெற்றனர். அவர்கள் புதுமைகளைப் புகுத்தினார்கள். ராஜாராம் பாகவதர் என்பவர் சிறந்த காங் கிரஸ் தியாகி. அவர் அந்நாளில் மகாத்மா காந்தியின் வரலாற்றை ஹரிகதையாக நிகழ்த்தி பெரும் புரட்சியை ஏற்படுத்தினார். மிகச் சிறந்த சங்கீத வித்வான்களாகத் திகழ்ந்த பெருமதிப்பிற்குரிய C. R. ஸ்ரீனி வாச அய்யங்கார், எண்ணப்பாடம் வெங்கட ராம பாகவதர், முத்தையா பாகவதர், கல்லிடைக்குறிச்சி வேதாந்த பாகவதர், பாலக்காடு அனந்தராம பாகவதர் போன்ற வர்கள் சங்கீத மேடையை விட்டு, ஹரிகதை மேடைக்கு வந்தார்கள்.

ஆண்களைப் போலவே பெண்களும் இக் கலைக்கு வந்தார்கள். மிகவும் சிறந்து விளங்

கியவர்கள் முறையே ஸ்ரீமதி ஸாஸ்வதி பாய், பன்னிபாய், திருக்கோகர்ணம் களகாய் புஜம், பத்மாஸனிபாய் போன்ற ஹரிகதா விதூஷிகள்.

ஹரிகதா கலைஞர்கள் அந்நாளில் பரத நாட்டிய கலையிலும் தேர்ச்சி பெற்று சிறந்து விளங்கினார்கள். அவர்கள் பாடிக்கொண்டே அபிநயமும் பிடிப்பார்களாம். இயல், இசை, நாடகம் இந்த மூன்றும் ஹரிகதைகளில் சிறப்புடன் கையாளப்பட்டு வந்திருக்கின்றது. தஞ்சையை ஆண்ட சரபோஜி மன்னர் ஹரிகதைக் கலையை மிகவும் போற்றி பேரா தரவு கொடுத்து வளர்த்தார்.

பண்டைய நாட்களில் ஒருசில சிவபுரா ணங்கள் மகாராஷ்டிர பக்த விஜயக் கதை கள், ஸ்ரீமத் ராமாயணம், பாகவதம் போன் றவைகள் மட்டும் ஹரிகதைகளாகக் கையா ளப்பட்டு வந்தன. இதற்குப் பிறகுதான் சற்றேறக்குறைய 100 ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்பே சைவ சமய நாயன்மார்களின் சரித் திரங்களை எல்லாம் கதாகாலகோபம் ரூப மாகச் செய்யத் தொடங்கினார்கள்.

நம் நாளில் மேலும் இக் கலையில் சிறப் பாக ஈடுபட்டு ஆழ்வார்கள் வைபவங்கள், சமயக் குரவர்களான சங்கரர், ஸ்ரீ ராமண ஜர், திகமாந்த மகா தேசிகள், சங்கீத மும் முர்த்திகளான ஸ்ரீ தியாகராஜர், முத்து ஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதர், சியாமா சாஸ்திரிகள், புரந்தர தாஸர், ராமகிருஷ்ண பரமஹம்சர், சாரதா அம்மையார், விவேகானந்தர், ஸ்ரீ ராமலிங்க அடிகள், ஸ்ரீ ரமண பகவான் போன்ற பல்வேறு மஹனீயர்கள் வாழ்க்கை வரலாறுகளை எல்லாம் ஹரிகதைகளாகத் தொகுத்து செய்யப்பட்டும் வருகிறது. நல்ல இலக்கியச் சுவை, உயர்ந்த சங்கீதம் முதலிய வற்றுடன் பற்பல பாஷைகளையும் கையாண்டு, நகைச் சுவையுடன் கேட்பவர் களின் மனதையும் ஈர்க்கும் விதத்தில் பாடல் கள் அமைத்தல் மிகவும் இன்றியமையாத தாகும்.



ஹரிகதைக்கு மிகவும் முக்கியமானது சாஸ்திரீய சங்கீதம். முறைப்படி பெரிய வித்வான்களிடம் ஸம்பிரதாயம், குருகுலம் போன்ற வழிகளில் பயின்று மஹனீயர்க ளால் இயற்றப்பட்ட கீர்த்தனங்களை எல்லாம் பாடிப் பயிற்சி பெற்று அவைகளை ஹரிகதை நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் அமைத்து நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் ரசிகப் பெருமக்களைக் கவரவேண்டும். நாட்டின் பழைய பண்பாடுகளுக்கு எந்தத் தீங்கும் செய்யாமல், தெய்வீகத்தையும் ஸநாதன தர்மத்தையும் காப்பாற்ற வேண்டிய பொறுப்பு ஹரிகதைக்கு உண்டு.

ஹரிகதைக்கு என்று தனியாக நிருபணங்களை இயற்றி, அவைகளை சம்பிரதாயப் படி கையாள வேண்டும். ஸ்வாதித் திருநாள் மகாராஜா சங்கீதத்தில் ஆர்வம் கொண்டு பத்மநாபன் விஷயமாக பல நூற்றுக்கணக்கான பாடல்களைப் பாடியுள்ளார். கீர்த்தனங்கள், பதங்கள், வர்ணங்கள் போன்றவைகளை இயற்றியவர். அவருக்கு ஹரிகதையில் மிகவும் ஈடுபாடு வந்தது. அதன் காரணமாக இரண்டு ஹரிகதைகளை நிருபணமாக இயற்றினார். முறையே "குசேலோபாக்யானம்", "அஜாமீனோ பாக்யானம்" ஆகிய இரண்டு கதைகளுக்கும் முறைப்படி அழகிய முறையில் ஸ்லோகங்கள், ஸாகிகள், திண்டிகள், பஞ்ச சாமரம், கட்கா, ஆர்யா, அஸவதாடி சவாய் போன்றவைகளை இயற்றி அமைத்திருப்பது உள்ளத்தை நெகிழ வைக்கக்கூடியதாகும். மகாராஜாவுக்கு ஹரிகதையில் இருக்கும் ஆர்வத்தையே வெளிப்படுத்துகிறது. இந்த இரண்டு கதைகளின் நிருபணங்களும், ஹரிகதை கலைஞர்களை ஆதரித்துப் போற்றிவந்தார்கள்.

### ஹரிகதை வேறு, உபன்யாசம் வேறு

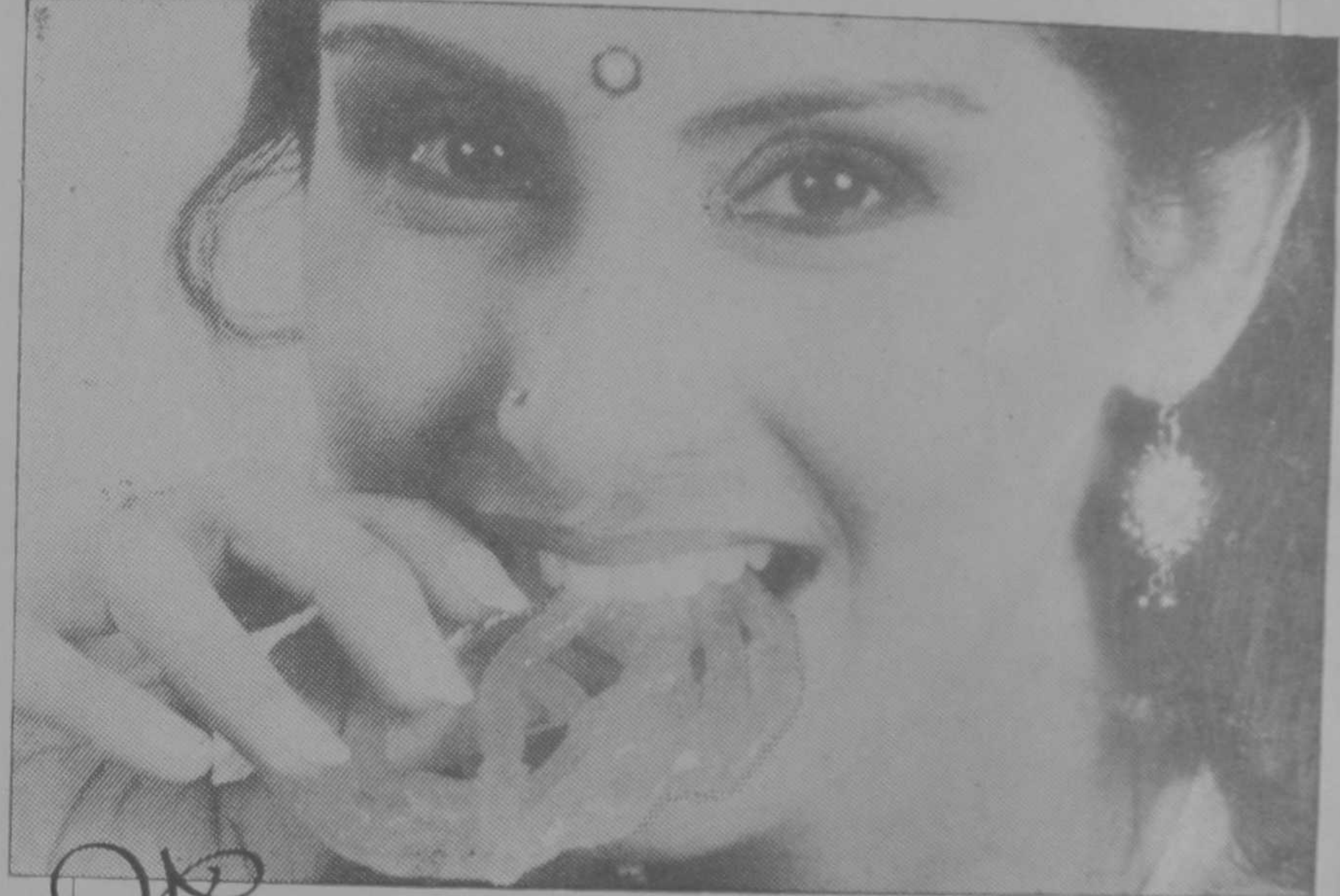
மகாராஜாக்கள், ஜமீன்தார்கள், வள்ளல்களால் ஆதரிக்கப்பட்ட இக்கலை சீரும் சிறப்பும் பெற்று ஒங்கி வளர்ந்து வந்து இருக்கிறது. ஆயின் ரஸிகர்களின் மத்தியில் இப்போது ஹரிகதை, உபன்யாசம் என்ற

இரண்டுக்கும் வித்தியாசம் தெரியாமல் இருக்கிறது. இரண்டும் நிச்சயமாக ஒன்றாகாது. ஹரிகதை வேறு, உபன்யாசம் வேறு. உபன்யாசம் என்பது ஒருவர் மாத்திரம் மேடையில் அமர்ந்து மூல ஸ்லோகங்களைச் சொல்லி அவற்றுடன் கதையையும் சொல்லுவது. ஆனால் ஹரிகதை அப்படி இல்லை. ஹரிகதை சொல்லும் கலைஞரையொட்டி பின்பாட்டு பாடுபவர்கள், ஹார்மோனியம், வயலின், மிருதங்கம் போன்ற பக்கவாத்தியங்கள் மிக அவசியம். இதிகாச புராண வரலாறுகளுக்கு ஏற்றவாறு சங்கீதம் அமைத்து, அத்துடன் மூல ஸ்லோகங்கள், வேதப் பிரமாணங்கள், ஆழ்வார், நாயன்மர்கள் பாடி அருளிய பாசுரங்கள் யதிகங்கள் போன்றனவற்றை மேற்கோள் காட்டி, பாடி எளிய முறையில் அனைவரும் ரசிக்கும்படி செய்வது ஹரிகதையாகும். உபன்யாசம் செய்பவர்களால் ஹரிகதை செய்ய முடியாது ஆனால் ஹரிகதை வித்வான்களால் உபன்யாசம் செய்ய முடியும்.

### எளிய கல்வி சாதனம்

ஹரிகதையின் மூலமாக புரியாத விஷயங்களையும் அனைவரும் எளிதில் புரிந்து கொள்ளக்கூடிய வகையில் எடுத்துச் சொல்ல முடியும், பக்தி மார்க்கத்தில் அனைவரையும் ஈடுபடுத்தக்கூடிய அரிய கலை ஹரிகதை, சாஸ்திரம், சங்கீதம், பன்மொழிப் புலமை தமிழ், தெலுங்கு, மராட்டி, ஸம்ஸ்கிருதம் போன்ற மொழிகளில் பயிற்சி, நல்ல சாரீரம் இவை எல்லாம் அமைந்து விட்டால் ஹரிகதையைப் போல் ரசிகப் பெருமக்களைக் கவரக்கூடிய கலையோ அல்லது அவர்களுக்குப் பண்பினைப் புகட்டும் எளிய முறையோ வேறெதுவும் இல்லை. ஆண், பெண் இரு பாலரும் இதில் ஆர்வம், கொண்டு முன்னுக்கு வரவேண்டும். சிறந்த பயிற்சி பெற்று சிறந்த ஹரிகதை கலைஞராக வரவேண்டும்.

*When time stops for a little sweetness...*



*We are there to share those moments with you.*

**bajaj hindusthan ltd.**

*Sweetening an entire generation.*

Bajaj Hindusthan brings you the finest sugar crystals manufactured from sun-kissed sugarcane. With an expertise perfected over 50 years from one of India's foremost sugar manufacturing units, has enabled Bajaj Hindusthan to crush 12 lakh tonnes of sugarcane annually by working in close harmony with 60,000 farmers. Keeping you in close touch with the best things in life everyday in everyway!